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THE CHRISTIAN ORATOR DELINEATED.

IN THREE PARTS.

By THOMAS WEALES, D.D.
Vicar of St. Sepulchre's.

Cum meum judicium oſtendero, ſicum legentibus relinquam.
QUINTILIAN.

Printed for T. Cadell, in the Strand.
M.DCC.LXXVIII.

THE

CHRISTIAN ORATOR.

PART THIRD.

BY THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

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MDCCLXXVIII.

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

ROBERT

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

THE FOLLOWING SHEETS,

UNDER THE HIGHEST SENSE OF HIS LORDSHIP'S

DISTINGUISHED LEARNING AND ABILITIES,

ARE INSCRIBED,

WITH ALL DUTIFUL RESPECT,

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

ERRATA.

Page 9. l. 6. *after* extent *insert a* comma

—— 37. l. 12. *dele* or

—— 67. l. 20. *for* more true *read* more or leſs true

—— 84. l. 4. *insert* Acts iii. *before* ver. 12—16.

—— ib. l. 20. *dele* Acts iii.

—— 92. l. *ult. cloſe the inverted commas as* it :" *and dele them to the end of the paragraph in the next page.*

—— 108. l. 6. for *orationes* read *orationis*

—— 209. l. 19. *for* underſtanding *read* ſtrength

—— 236. l. 7. *inſtead of* admiration point *put a* full-ſtop.

—— 280. l. 5. for *prolepſis* read *paralepſis*

THE CHRISTIAN ORATOR DELINEATED.

INTRODUCTION.

BY that ſpecies of compoſition which goes under the name of a SERMON, I underſtand, a diſcourſe that is but one contexture of doctrines, thoughts, words, figures, and images, contained in holy writ. The great ends which a preacher hath in view are, and can be no other, than either to command the reaſon, engage the fancy, or touch the paſſions of his

hearers. Now there are three qualities, or perfections, indiſpenſibly requiſite for the attainment of ſuch valuable ends, viz. an unity of deſign, a juſt diſtribution of the ſubject into its ſeveral heads, and a ſimplicity of thought and expreſſion. In regard to the firſt, a perfect diſcourſe does virtually comprehend in it but one ſingle propoſition, or branch of doctrine, and that placed in the moſt ſtriking point of light. Certain roving declaimers, whoſe motley pieces are made up of the moſt independent matters that can be eaſily imagined, are wonderfully deficient in this article. Their diſcourſes, in which a variety of morals or doctrines are treated in a ſlight perfunctory manner, have the ordinary effect of large proſpects, where the eye ſees little or nothing diſtinctly, and as it ought to be ſeen. With reſpect to the

ſecond requiſite, or a juſt diviſion of the ſubject into its ſeveral heads, it cannot be too ſimple and conciſe. The two radical defects of our ancient ſermons are their being crumbled into minute inſignificant diviſions, or enervated by uſeleſs and impertinent digreſſions. And many a modern one totally void of that lucid order, or ſuch a connexion of parts as ſerves to reflect a light upon, and ſtrengthen each other, is little elſe but a parcel of maxims or ſentences tacked together in I know not what fantaſtic form. Of this ſort are moſt of thoſe equivocal things commonly called eſſays, which afford no conviction to the underſtanding, no entertainment to the fancy, no feeling to the heart. Their authors are thus happily decyphered by the Poet.

Theſe, labouring like paviours, mend our ways
With heavy, huge, repeated flat eſſays;
Ram their coarſe nonſenſe down, tho' ne'er ſo dull,
And hem at ev'ry thump upon your ſcull.

YOUNG.

By a ſimplicity of thought, I mean all thoſe ſentiments which ariſe naturally out of the ſubject, and are proportioned to the common ſenſe and ideas of mankind. Thoughts of this kind (which ſeem ſo obvious, and as it were the ſpontaneous growth of nature itſelf) are ſuch as may fall into the minds of every man, but generally do not; ſuch as all the world may have, and but few really have. Each ſentiment that is affected or unnatural, mean or abject, finical or preciſe, are alike faulty, by departing from a juſt ſimplicity. The eſſential and inherent perfection of ſuch a ſimplicity

plicity of thought appears from hence, that it is equally reliſhed by the learned and illiterate, perſons of every form of life, every degree of underſtanding. By a ſimplicity of expreſſion I would be underſtood a natural and eaſy ſtile, free from all peculiarities of diction or anomalies of conſtruction. All ſtately and gigantic, all quaint and flowery, all homely and beaten roads of expreſſion are repugnant to, and deviate from, this laſt quality or perfection. Some preachers ſhall by certain odd and peculiar modes of expreſſing themſelves, give every thing they deliver a foreign and unnatural air, which cannot but excite a wearineſs and diſguſt. "The eloquence of the pulpit (ſays "the ſenſible Bruyere) with reſpect to "what is merely human and depend- "ing on the genius of the orator, is "concealed, and its difficulty known

" to but very few. How much art
" muſt there be to pleaſe at the ſame
" time that you perſuade: You are
" obliged to walk in none but beaten
" paths, to ſay what has been ſaid,
" and what is foreſeen that you would
" ſay: The ſubjects are great, but
" ſtale and worn. The principles are
" certain, but every one of the audi-
" ence perceives the inference at firſt
" glance. If he deſerts his common
" places, he ceaſes to be popular, he
" is either too abſtracted, or he de-
" claims, he no longer preaches the
" goſpel. A noble ſimplicity is all
" that he has occaſion for, but it will
" coſt him dear to attain it. It is a
" rare talent, and above the reach of
" ordinary men."

PART I.

AS man is compounded of three principal ingredients, viz. reaſon, imagination, and paſſions, eloquence divides itſelf into the rational, the florid, and the pathetic, according to the proportion in which it is addreſſed to one or the other. The pulpit eloquence in England is plainly of the ſevere and rational ſpecies, a general ſpirit of reaſoning and enquiry having in a great degree extinguiſhed the natural enthuſiaſms of the human mind in religious ſubjects. Ranging however all Chriſtian Orators under three diſtinct claſſes, I ſhall endeavour to mark out the capital beauties and

imperfections which belong to each of them.

If you would behold the native light of truth obſcured by no cloudy or ambiguous phraſes, no falſe or diſtorted ſentiments, no corrupt paſſions or acquired prejudices, peruſe the ineſtimable ſermons of CLARKE and CONEYBEARE. The chief merit of theſe two celebrated preachers lies in that ſcholaſtic preciſion and philoſophic cloſeneſs, with which each ſpecial article of faith or morals is treated. Few or no ſallies of fancy are committed, which ariſe from the mind's collecting all its powers to view only one ſide of a ſubject, while it leaves the other unobſerved. All florid epithets, all frigid circumlocutions, which only tend to weaken or debaſe an argument, are utterly rejected. Each

finiſhed diſcourſe forms a whole, coherent and proportioned in itſelf, with due ſubordinacy of conſtituent parts. If it turns upon a branch of morality, or any particular virtue, they never fail to ſtate the limits, extent and compaſs of it, with a wonderful juſtneſs and propriety. If it reſts upon any article of faith, they ever comprize the doctrinal part in ſuch a ſpace, as to leave ſufficient room for a diſtinct and particular enforcement of the practical duties reſulting from it.

With what logical accuracy, and that ſuited to the level or reach of the moſt ordinary hearer, does a CLARKE place it beyond the ſhadow of a doubt, that man's trueſt wiſdom conſiſts in the practice of virtue. Behold a beautiful chain of inductions, conſequences, and demonſtrations, formed altogether

by

by common ſenſe. " If, ſays he, " wiſdom conſiſts in ſtudying thoſe " things which are of the greateſt uſe " and neceſſity for us to know, if it " be wiſe to employ our thoughts " about things in their own nature " the moſt excellent, and in their re- " lation to us of the utmoſt import- " ance; if it be wiſe to purſue the " nobleſt ends, and in the purſuit " thereof to uſe the beſt and propereſt " means; if it be wiſe to conſult our " own real happineſs, and to be more " concerned for the improvement of " our minds in practical knowledge, " than for amuſing them with vain " and empty ſpeculations; if eternity " be of more importance than time, " and a never-ceaſing duration than " a tranſitory moment; if the favour " of God be infinitely more valuable " than the friendſhip of the world;

" if

" if joy and ſatisfaction of mind be
" truly more deſirable than an endleſs
" anxiety, horror and deſpair; if peace,
" love, and charity, and univerſal
" good-will be more eligible than
" wars, confuſions, and deſolations; in
" a word, if wiſdom conſiſts in
" knowing and diſtinguiſhing, in chuſ-
" ing and adhering to whatever things
" are true, honeſt, juſt, pure, lovely,
" of good report, things that promote
" the health of our bodies and ſe-
" cure the peace of our ſouls, things
" that eſtabliſh the order of the
" world, and make other men happy
" as well as ourſelves, things that
" make our preſent enjoyments eaſy,
" and the remembrance of what is
" paſt comfortable, and the hopes
" and expectations of what is to
" come ſecure; if the chooſing theſe
" things be the part of a wiſe man,

" then

" then is religion evidently man's " trueſt wiſdom."

How naturally do perſuaſion, as well as conviction, wait upon each member which this excellent paragraph is made up of! How agreeably are the minds of an audience kept in ſuſpenſe from one end of it to the other, even till it cloſes to their full ſatisfaction and perfect aſſent! In what a ſtrong light is a doctrine placed by ſuch a diſtinct enumeration of particulars! How much does the force as well as grace of arguments or inſtructions depend on their conciſeneſs!

With what marvellous force and beauty hath he made particular mention of the ſeveral perfections which conſtitute the divine nature or eſſence, and

and thereby rendered our idea of God infinitely more auguſt, more ſenſible, more touching. "The knowledge of "God, ſays he, muſt not be a bare "ſpeculation, but a ſerious, practical, "affecting impreſſion, and a deep "ſenſe upon the mind of a Supreme "Being, whoſe glory no eye can "behold, whoſe majeſty no thought "can comprehend, whoſe power no "ſtrength can reſiſt, from whoſe "preſence no ſwiftneſs can flee, "from whoſe knowledge no ſecret can "be concealed, whoſe juſtice no art "can evade, whoſe goodneſs every "creature partakes of."

No writer is ſuperior to him in an accuracy of diſtinction upon the moſt difficult and perplexed topics. Of this ſort is the following one, among a number of the like inte-

reſting

reſting nature. " Things, ſays he, " contrary to that part even of the " law of nature itſelf, which is " founded originally in the will of " God, and not in the neceſſary and " eſſential nature of things, may be " done upon particular and extraor- " dinary occaſions by the immediate " and expreſs command of God. But " that part of the law of nature, " which is not founded on the will, " but on the very exiſtence of God, " and the eſſentially and eternally im- " mutable nature and relations of " things; this is in no circumſtances " capable of any variation: For in- " ſtance, that the life of an innocent " perſon ſhould be taken away by the " authority of any power upon earth, " is contrary to the law of nature. " Nevertheleſs, ſince the right which " even an innocent perſon has to

" his

" his life, is not founded in the eſ-
" ſential nature of things, but merely
" in the will and free gift of God,
" it is plain he may as juſtly appoint
" it to be taken away by any other
" means he pleaſes, as by a fever or
" peſtilence. Had God commanded
" Abraham to hate his blameleſs ſon,
" the command had been in its own
" nature impoſſible and abſurd."

No preacher is equal to him for a familiar acquaintance with, and clear expoſition of ſcripture language. His method of drawing together, and comparing paſſages of a ſimilar nature and tendency, is admirable towards forming a juſt notion of the ſpirit of religion in general, as well as letting in light upon the moſt intricate and obſcure.

Biſhop

Biſhop CONEYBEARE is wonderfully happy in hitting upon that point on which the bent of each argument turns, and the force of each motive depends. One great truth pervades through each correct diſcourſe, whoſe ſeveral heads or parts do gradually prepare for, and mutually ſuſtain one another. He is ever convincing, becauſe he writes upon principles which are level to the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind. Can any thing be more clear and ſuccinct, more ſtrong and perſuaſive, than the following page, in which he goes about to vindicate Chriſt and his apoſtles from the leaſt imputation of craft and impoſture in the facts they relate. "Perſons of their character "for virtue and integrity could ne-"ver attempt it——they were, by the "meanneſs of their education, un-

qualified

" qualified to contrive it——by the
" numbers concerned in publiſhing
" theſe *facts*, incapable of concealing
" it——and if any thing of this kind
" had been attempted, it could never
" have eſcaped the diſcovery of ſo
" many nice enquirers in ſo learned
" and curious an age. Add to
" this, that the religion they endea-
" voured by this means to eſtabliſh,
" expoſed them to the utmoſt ſuffer-
" ings in this life, and threatened
" eternal puniſhment to falſhoods in
" the next. This religion they be-
" lieved either to be true or falſe;
" if they thought it true, they muſt
" withal believe, that thoſe were lia-
" ble to eternal puniſhment who ſhould
" endeavour to propagate it by a falſ-
" hood; but if they thought it falſe,
" they would never have attempted,
" at the certain expence of all that

"was valuable in this life, to pro-
"pagate a falſe religion." Such a vein of good ſtrong plain ſenſe ſtands in need of no other ornament than its own genuine force. Let me juſt obſerve here, that the time of our Saviour's appearance in the fleſh was peculiarly happy in this ſpecial article, that we can now ſee the truth of ſeveral facts mentioned in the goſpel confirmed by the collateral teſtimony of profane writers, in a much greater variety than could have been expected in any former age, there being no remote portion of time we are ſo well acquainted with, as of that under the twelve firſt Cæſars.

Few preachers excel, or come nigh to, this admirable prelate in the talent of drawing a fund of the moſt natural and the moſt ſolid moralities from

from the hiſtorical paſſages in holy writ.

His diſcourſes upon the hiſtory of Joſeph and his brethren, and the character of Herod, are in this view highly to be admired. Living examples indeed of this ſort directly appeal not only to our underſtandings, but to our ſenſes and paſſions. They are a kind of inſtruction in epitome, that men of all ranks and degrees are able to comprehend, and few can withſtand the force and efficacy of. There is one particular which richly deſerves the praiſe and imitation of every chriſtian preacher, that let the moral duty which he is treating upon, be what it will, he is ſure to do juſtice to the religion of Chriſt by taking notice of the improvements which it hath made in it. Indeed, all chriſtian

morality hath its foundation in a belief in Chriſt Jeſus, and from thence draws all its perfection, all its force. If in any part of a diſcourſe he ſhould be found rather too abſtracted or metaphyſical, it will be readily admittted for an imperfection. Nor can a parochial preacher ſhew himſelf more wiſe and judicious in any one reſpect, than in not letting the reaſoning be more cloſe than the maſs of the people can bear. It is no ordinary taſk or virtue to render himſelf intelligible to them by looſening and diſentangling the argumentative part with proper diviſions, as well as ſuch examples and alluſions as are moſt familiar and obvious to them. Certain diſcourſes may be looked upon rather as leſſons or exerciſes in divinity, than Sermons.

Our

Our BLESSED SAVIOUR excels in that branch of oratory which conſiſts in weight of argument, addreſſed to the underſtanding of his hearers. *Never man ſpake as Jeſus ſpake*, conſidered in the light of a juſt and accurate reaſoner. The clearneſs of his arguments does in no wiſe detract from their ſolidity, nor the ſolidity from their clearneſs. The great founder of the chriſtian ſchool hath no ſuperior in the Socratic way of arguing, which hath this peculiar excellency, that it lays open to readers of the meaneſt attainments. With what holy ſkill and conſummate prudence did Jeſus evade giving a direct reply to an inſidious queſtion on the part of the prieſts and elders, by aſking them another in his turn: *I will aſk of you*, ſays he, *one thing, and anſwer me. The Baptiſm of John, was it from hea-*

ven, or of men? A queſtion this of all others the moſt ſhrewd and confounding in itſelf, and which obliged them to yield and ſurrender at diſcretion. For mark the reaſoning of theſe proud and exceptious Phariſees among themſelves. *If we ſhall ſay, From heaven, he will ſay, Why then believed ye him not? But if we ſay, Of men, all the people will ſtone us, for they be perſuaded that John was a prophet.* Not knowing how to make their eſcape at any rate, and owning themſelves at a loſs for an anſwer, they ſaid, *they could not tell whence he was*, Matt. xxi. 27. A train of long-deduced arguments, or cloſe-connected reaſonings on the part of Jeſus, might, and doubtleſs would, have been thrown away upon a ſet of men, who were put to utter ſilence and confuſion by a ſingle plain queſtion.

Beautiful

Beautiful in this view was his victory over the Phariſees, who at another time took counſel together how they might betray or *entangle him in his talk*. *Maſter*, (ſaid they, in a manner truly worthy of themſelves) *we know that thou art true, neither careſt for any man; tell us therefore, is it lawful to give tribute to Cæſar, or not?* The ſame perſon whoſe inſtructions they had been wont to look upon with the laſt degree of contempt, is juſt at this inſtant to be addreſſed with the reſpectful and endearing title of a Maſter, whoſe truth and integrity were in no wiſe to be doubted of. Liſten to, and admire the ſage reply of Chriſt to a queſtion ſo big with ſubtilty and malice, and which did ſo perfectly accord with the glozing words that immediately went before it. *Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?* diſcovering to them

at once how altogether fruitleſs was the ſnare which they had laid for him, and how utterly incurable was their prejudice againſt that truth which they affected to commend. *Shew me*, ſays he, *the tribute money, and they brought him a penny; and he ſays to them, whoſe image and ſuperſcription is this?* A queſtion this, which was admirably calculated to draw from them ſuch an anſwer as itſelf was ſufficient to reſolve their doubts about the lawfulneſs of giving tribute to Cæſar. *They ſay unto him, Cæſar's*, i. e. Tiberias's, who reigned at that juncture. *Then ſaith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæſar the things which are Cæſar's, and unto God the things that are God's.* Struck with a little admiration at his penetrating and unexceptionable deciſion of the caſe, and ſufficiently chagrined that their malicious intention ſhould

prove

prove abortive, *they left him, and went their way*, the ſame determined infidels as ever. See *John* viii. 7. *Luke* vi. 9.

How keen and ſpirited were his replies to certain Jews, who reſted their ſalvation purely upon this article, *that they were of the ſeed of Abraham. We*, ſay they, *be Abraham's ſeed, and were never in bondage to any man: how ſayeſt thou, ye ſhall be made free?* John viii. 33. How preſently did Chriſt let them ſee, that their empty boaſtings of a deſcent from Abraham were perfectly conſiſtent with the moſt abject ſlavery upon earth. And however they might value themſelves on belonging to the family of God, which was firſt ſet in order by Moſes, his authority was only that of a ſervant, which muſt in due ſeaſon give place to that of the ſon, whoſe government

ſhould laſt for ever. *Verily I ſay unto you, whoſoever committeth ſin is the ſervant of ſin. And the ſervant abideth not in the houſe for ever, but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.* Upon their repeating a ſecond time, *Abraham is our father*, ver. 39. Jeſus returns with no ordinary degree of ſeverity, *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye ſeek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham: ye do the deeds of your father*, ver. 40, 41. With what indignant zeal does he reply to them, urging that they were not born of an idolatrous race, but of parents that worſhip God, and him only. *If God was your father, ye would love me, for I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of*

myſelf, but he ſent me: Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do, ver. 42, 44. With what a becoming aſſurance does he challenge them to find out, with all their ſpite and malice, any thing amiſs in him. *Which of you convinceth me of ſin? and if I ſay the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God, heareth God's word: ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God*, ver. 46, 47. Now mark the laſt refuge of defeated envy and rancour, which are ever wont to break forth into bitter and reproachful words. *Then anſwered the Jews and ſaid to him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a devil?* It would be a ſin not to repeat his anſwer to theſe virulent and provoking terms, which carried with it ſuch wonderful mildneſs and truth. *I have not a devil:*

vil: but I honour my father, and ye do diſhonour me, ver. 49. How low and deſpicable are vicious minds that offer injuries! how great and worthy of admiration is innocence which riſes ſuperior to them!

No teacher was ever ſo expert and ſucceſsful in convincing a man of his error, and obliging him even to paſs ſentence upon himſelf, as *our bleſſed Lord*. His great ſecret lay in putting a caſe, in which the perſon whom he would undeceive did not at firſt hearing ſuſpect himſelf to be at all concerned. For how difficult ſoever we find it to know a vice by its proper name which happens to be our own, yet we can preſently find it out when it ſhews itſelf in another man. We are little better than children of a larger growth, that muſt

be

be over-reached, or unawares cheated into a true knowledge of ourſelves. Memorable in this light is the inſtance of a certain lawyer who was ſo narrow or ſo prejudiced as to look upon no one as his neighbour that was not of the ſame ſect or nation with himſelf. Under the full power of ſuch a ſenſeleſs error, he put this queſtion to Jeſus: *And who is my neighbour?* Inſtead of giving a direct or poſitive anſwer, our Lord tells him an artleſs ſtory, which innocently led him to an acknowledgment of his wild notion or miſtake. *A certain man went down, &c.* Luke x. 30. He that might have been ſubtle enough to evade, or obſtinate enough to withſtand a train of ſolid arguments, is converted or overcome by the moſt ordinary or familiar tale. The *Former* of the human heart and

underſtanding

underſtanding knew and practiſed the moſt happy means of applying to them.

Our divine Maſter is no leſs to be admired for a talent of ſtrong, ſuccinct and accurate reaſoning. His rhetorick never paſſes for a reaſon, nor his declamation for preciſion and argument. The proofs which he makes uſe of in ſupport of any doctrine or truths, being never too much ſtudied, or out of the road of common ſenſe, are at once ſtrong and popular. His language is ſo plain and natural, as if it had not been deeply conſidered, but at the ſame time ſo pure and exact as to ſhew that it proceeded from the greateſt depth of thought. His images and alluſions being ever drawn from common or familiar life, render every thing clear and evident to the moſt ordinary reader. To ſingle out one

SERMON of our Lord's, which cannot fail of being eternally beautiful and eternally admired; I mean, *that upon the Mount*. The egregious folly of being ſolicitouſly careful for the morrow cannot but be felt by every man who reads it with common attention. Mark the force and juſtneſs of his method of arguing. *Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on: Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* Matthew vi. 25. Can that Providence, upon which ye muſt depend for life itſelf, be poſſibly wanting to ſupply you with ſuch a proportion of meat as is convenient for it? Shall not the ſame God, to whom ye are beholden for ſtrength and vigour of body, be willing and able to find you in that raiment which it cannot

cannot ſubſiſt without? *Behold,* he goes on, *the fowls of the air; for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feedeth them: Are ye not much better than they?* ver. 26. The like all-gracious Being, who hath made ſuch ample proviſion for even the *fowls of the air,* in a way ſuited to their irrational nature, can never fail to provide for you, to whom he hath given dominion over them, in a way ſuited to your rational nature. *Which of you,* (he directly ſubjoins) *by taking thought, can add one cubit to his ſtature,* ver. 27. Such an anxious thought as is hardly conſiſtent with the belief of a ſuperintending Providence, is juſt as fruitleſs as it is impious. Your preſent ſtate becomes the more wretched and the leſs ſecure in proportion to that degree of

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care or ſollicitude which implies an abſolute diſtruſt of the God of heaven and earth. *And why take ye thought for raiment? Conſider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they ſpin. And yet I ſay unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of theſe! Wherefore, if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?* ver. 28, 29. Methinks he throws a bluſh and confuſion into the faces of the over-careful children of this world, by referring them to the *lilies* or *graſs* of the field for leſſons of inſtruction. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for the things of itſelf: ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,* ver. 34. The argument which he cloſes with

is no leſs affectionate than forcible. The evil of each ſucceeding day is quite ſufficient for any mortal living to ſupport or contend with. And to-morrow, if it does come at all, will of courſe bring its own cares or troubles along with it. The man who can liſten to ſuch a teacher without being at all the wiſer or better for it, who will notwithſtanding be extending his ſilly thoughts beyond the compaſs of to-day, is at once an enemy to his own repoſe, and an utter ſtranger to the doctrine of Chriſt. BEHOLD in this juſtly celebrated SERMON of our bleſſed *Lord's* an entire code of chriſtian morality, of that morality which ſo happily unites both all the ſweetneſs and all the perfection of the evangelic law; of that morality which is equally removed from all exceſs either on the ſide of rigour or relaxation;

ation; of that morality which is neither too excellent for human nature and above it, or too baſe and below it. How poor, how imperfect does every ſyſtem of *heathen* morals ſhew, when contraſted with it! The extent of the former reached no farther than what they called the four cardinal virtues, and theſe were practiſed by them upon a very inferior principle. TULLY and ARISTOTLE abound with many high encomiums on fortitude, juſtice, and temperance, ſtrongly recommending them as in their own nature becoming and honourable, ariſing from the relations of perſons and things. But whether of the two hath derived our obligation to the practice of them from the authority of God, which is the true principle of religious virtue; and for this reaſon they are ſo generally called in *Scripture* by

the name of Duties? What idea did they entertain of not only taking up our croſs, but glorying in it; of renouncing not only the things of the world, but ourſelves; of not only not living after, but *crucifying* the fleſh; of not only overlooking an injury or evil, but *overcoming* that *evil* with *good?*

Many a valuable diſcourſe of our bleſſed Saviour's is tranſmitted to us by the pen of his *beloved diſciple*, in that GOSPEL which may be conſidered in the light of a ſupplement to the other three, and, written with his own hand, was preſerved by the church of Epheſus till the time of the emperor Honorius.

To make mention but of one, viz. that which is contained in the fifth chapter of St. *John*, wherein Jeſus

proves to a demonſtration, that he was the * expected *Meſſiah*. The arguments which he makes uſe of for that purpoſe are not only the moſt powerful and concluſive in themſelves, but admirably ſuited to thoſe very perſons to whom he addreſſed himſelf. The firſt is drawn from the expreſs teſtimony of *John the Baptiſt*, whom the Jews acknowledged for a prophet, and than whom no witneſs could be more *capable*, more *faithful*, or more diſintereſted; more firm and unſhaken, v. 33. See *John* i. 19, 29. The ſecond is taken from the *miraculous works* which he wrought before their own eyes, v. 34. See

* That there was a general expectation of a Meſſiah or great Prophet about the time that our Saviour came, appears from *Luke*, c. ii. 25, 38. c. iii. 15. *Mat.* xi. 3. *John*, c. i. 41. v. 14. vii. 40.

Matt. xi. 4. *John* ix. 30. A third is built upon the moſt unexceptionable authority, even that of the *Law* and the *Prophets*, ver. 37, 46. See *Gen.* xlix. 10. *Deut.* xviii. If God had ſpoken by a ſingle *Prophet*, or two, there might have been ſome ſhadow of a pretence to ſuſpect colluſion or concert. But to imagine that a deſign of ſuch a nature could be formed by a ſet of men who lived at the diſtance of many centuries, argues a degree of ſuſpicion or credulity beſide the direction of common ſenſe. Could they poſſibly have been ſo circumſtantial in ſetting down the preciſe *time*, *place*, and *manner* of Chriſt's *coming* in *the fleſh*, if they had not been let into thoſe particulars by God himſelf? Or could Moſes *humanly* foreſee, that ſo many *Prophets* would ariſe in ſo many ages, to juſtify, explain,

and carry on what he at firſt related? A fourth argument for a proof of his divine miſſion is taken from the blameleſs tenor of his life, which was infinitely removed from all ſelfiſh and ambitious views. ver. 41. A train of ſuch irrefragable arguments was only to be reſiſted by men who were determined at any rate not to be convinced. And the true reaſon of their *rejecting* him was plainly no other than this, that their ſpirit and temper, their ends and deſigns were diametrically oppoſite to his. How could perſons made up of boundleſs *ambition*, inſatiable *avarice*, and ſpiritual pride, avoid bearing an incurable hatred to ſuch a teacher, and ſuch leſſons as he brought to their ears. Strong as the evidences of the truth of his Goſpel are in themſelves, their luſts

and paſſions would not permit them to ſee it.

Of how different a nature is that *ſemblance* of *reaſoning* which ſome would fain paſs upon their hearers for ſolid argument? Of how inferior a rank and character are certain feeble or ſuperficial arguments, which ſhall at firſt powerfully ſtrike the fancy and take the judgment captive before it enters into a thorough examination of their intrinſic weight? And can we help drawing at leaſt one concluſion from a diſcourſe of our Lord's, ſo irreſiſtible in itſelf, viz. that all unbelief is and cannot but be the direct and immediate reſult of a voluntary abuſe or corruption either in the *will* or the *underſtanding*, or perhaps both? To which may be added, that no individual can embrace the true religion as

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it ought to be embraced, unleſs he be permitted to judge, as well as make uſe of ſuch permiſſion, concerning the truth or foundation of that religion itſelf.

The difference between the *revelation* contained in the *Old* and *New Teſtament* does not conſiſt in the revelation itſelf, for they are in effect and *eſſentially* the ſame.* *Jeſus* has expreſsly

* The harmony we find in this holy Book (ſays Sir *Charles Wolſeley*) is of great remark upon theſe three accounts. Firſt, 'tis a harmony that reſults from exceeding different ſtyles, and the greateſt variety of matter. 'Tis not ſo many men's bare agreement together upon any few plain points, but 'tis ſo many men's agreeing together who have writ hiſtorically, prophetically, doctrinally, with wonderful variation both for matter and manner, of all the ſublimeſt notions the minds of men are capable of, as well as of the plaineſt truths; of things in heaven, in earth, in hell; of the whole buſineſs of this world and the next.

Secondly,

expreſsly ſaid that the ſum of religion is made up of theſe two articles, in the *love of God*, and our *neighbour*, *Mat.* xxii. 37. And do not all the *law* and the *prophets* hang upon theſe *two commandments?* The *manner* in which the two *Revelations* were made, and the *evidence* of each, are indeed widely different. For God made known his will to our fathers ſucceſſively and by portions, whereas he revealed by *Jeſus Chriſt* all his will and all his pleaſure. *Eph.* i. 3. The canon of the *Old Teſtament* was not finiſhed in leſs than twelve hundred years, for ſuch was the ſpace of time between *Moſes* and *Malachy*; whereas the books

Secondly, 'tis a harmony reſulting from an involved correſpondency of the parts one with another, and of every part with the whole, in ſuch a way as could not be foreſeen or contrived by any human wiſdom. Thirdly, 'tis ſuch a harmony as is daily more diſcoverable by the accidents of time.

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of the *New Teſtament* were all comprized within the compaſs of a very few years. God ſpoke in former days with ſome degree of *obſcurity*, the truths and duties of religion being often propoſed under *types*, *veils*, and *figures*. But in theſe *laſt days* the pure, ſimple, naked *truth* is fully declared by Chriſt and his apoſtles.

St. PAUL lays the greateſt weight of his oratory upon the ſtrength of argument offered to the underſtanding of his hearers. This great apoſtle poſſeſſed in a high degree the rare and uſeful talent of entering into the characters, prejudices, and expectations of others, and of knowing how to ſuit his applications prudently, but with innocence, to them. When he ſpeaks to the Jews, (whom he had a natural affection for, and whoſe ſtrong bias towards

wards their own conſtitution he was no ſtranger to) he inſinuates what he hath to offer by pleading his own kindred with them, and making honourable mention of Abraham and the Law.——But when he would draw over the Gentiles, he never fails to dwell upon the rejection of the Jews, and the Gentiles being grafted into their room, talking rather in leſſening terms upon the articles of circumciſion and the ceremonial law.*

Several diſcourſes of St. PAUL are recorded by St. LUKE, in which all the inſinuating arts of the moſt po-

* He tells the *Gentiles* that *Abraham* believed unto juſtification before he was circumciſed; and that the believing Gentiles were his *ſpiritual* ſeed; but the Jews, as ſuch, were only his *carnal*.

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lite and conſummate addreſs are diſplayed, all the thunder of the moſt vehement and commanding orator, without any of his idle parade or oſtentation.

His apology before king Agrippa, contained in the *Acts*, c. xxvi, is perhaps the moſt delicate and maſterly that ever was penned. Behold the friendleſs but undaunted priſoner of *Jeſus Chriſt* ſtretching forth his hand and anſwering for himſelf before the moſt auguſt and courtly audience aſſembled at his trial. *I think myſelf* (breaks forth the Chriſtian Hero) *happy, king Agrippa, becauſe I ſhall anſwer for myſelf this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accuſed of the Jews: Eſpecially, becauſe I know thee to be expert in all cuſtoms and queſtions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beſeech*

ſeech to hear me patiently. An exordium this, altogether ſuitable to and worthy of the great Apoſtle, who had joined all the elegance of the courtier to all the ſincerity of the chriſtian, and could hardly fail to gain him an impartial hearing from a *King*, who was eminent for his literature and good ſenſe. The honeſt plainneſs and ſimplicity of the narrative that follows cannot but pleaſe thoſe taſtes, which are the moſt unprejudiced and the moſt refined. *My manner of life from my youth up, which was at the firſt, &c.* ver. 4—7. St. PAUL, after the manner of the Grecian Orator, arreſting his thoughts in the midſt of their career, with a ſeeming abruptneſs breaks forth, *Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible with you that God ſhould raiſe the dead?* ver. 8. Then returning to his apology, which he ſeemed to have loſt ſight of, he

he proceeds, *I verily thought with myſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth. Which thing I alſo, &c.* v. 9 to 23. Now mark the ſpeech which a relation that carried with it all the genuine marks of truth and ſincerity drew from the unhallowed lips of a *Feſtus*, one that was an utter ſtranger to either Jewiſh or Chriſtian notions. *As he thus ſpake for himſelf, Feſtus ſaid with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beſide thyſelf: much learning doth make thee mad,* ver. 24. To whom Paul directly made a reply much too full of diſcretion and calmneſs to proceed from the mouth of a *perſon* who was *beſide himſelf. I am not mad, moſt noble Feſtus, but ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs. For the king knoweth of theſe things, before whom alſo I ſpeak freely: for I am perſuaded that none of theſe things*

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are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner, ver. 25, 26. Liſten to and admire his ſudden addreſs to the king himſelf, as a witneſs of the truth of what he uttered. *King Agrippa, believeſt thou the prophets? I know that thou believeſt.* How infinitely taking, how ſincerely complaiſant was the apoſtle's anſwer to his own queſtion! How could he poſſibly expreſs with more grace and beauty his firm perſuaſion of the king's belief in thoſe prophetical writings, which are ſo eminently fulfilled in the perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt!* And can we at all wonder that ſuch an apology on the part of *Paul* ſhould leave behind it ſuch an impreſſion upon the mind and heart of *Agrippa*, as was followed by that celebrated elogium, *Almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a chriſtian?* An elogium that drew after it as handſome a reply

reply as ever was recorded in prophane or ſacred writ, and could alone be dictated by the beſt of hearts and heads. *And Paul ſaid, I would to God that not only thou, but alſo all that hear me this day, were both almoſt and altogether ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds,* ver. 29. Let me juſt remark, that the *converſion* of this great apoſtle is in itſelf one of the moſt convincing as well as touching motives to a *belief in Chriſt Jeſus*. Such a change in a man ſo intelligent, ſo zealous for the traditions of his fathers, was of all others the moſt authentic, the moſt undeniable juſtification of all which he urged in behalf of the religion of Chriſt. Scarce a ſingle diſcourſe was delivered by him to the Jews, in which he did not appeal *to himſelf* as a living demonſtration of the truth of the *Goſpel*. But a *Paul* was not only ſent to the *loſt*

ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, but to all mankind. He entered into many a country which the demon of *idolatry* had taken full poſſeſſion of, and caſt him out. The empire *of faith was eſtabliſhed* by him in *Athens* and the Areopagus, where they ſacrificed to the *unknown God*; in *Epheſus*, where ſuperſtition had placed its throne; in *Rome*, where ambition held its full ſovereignty; in the court of *Nero*, which had been the centre of all vices.

His ſermon at *Antioch*, in which he demonſtrates to the Jews that *Jeſus* was the *Meſſiah*, is admirable in the reaſoning part. The arguments which the great Apoſtle makes uſe of for that purpoſe are at once perfectly obvious to men of the loweſt attainments, and infinitely ſtrong to thoſe

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of the higheſt. This excellent diſcourſe opens with a brief epitome of the Jewiſh hiſtory down to the time that God raiſed up David for their king, of whoſe ſeed *Jeſus*, according to promiſe, was deſcended.

Men of Iſrael, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Iſrael choſe our fathers, and exalted the people, when they dwelt as ſtrangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it, &c. Of this man's ſeed hath God raiſed unto Iſrael a Saviour, Jeſus. Acts c. xiii. ver. 16, 23. Chriſt deſcended naturally from David, not by Solomon (whom the Jews hold that he was to deſcend from) but by *Nathan*. Accordingly St. *Luke*, ſhewing his natural deſcent through the ſeveral ſucceſſions of thoſe from whom he took

fleſh and blood, deduces only Nathan's line. St. *Matthew*, in his deduction of our Saviour's pedigree, reckons only from *Abraham, to whom the firſt promiſe of the kingdom was made*, Gen. xvii. 6. intending to ſet down his political or royal one, by which he had a right to the crown of the Jews. *

St. *Paul* having premiſed that the chief deſign of God in chooſing Abraham, and the Patriarchs, and the nation of the Jews deſcended from them, for a peculiar and ſeparate people, and delivering them from Egyptian bon-

* Thoſe things in the Goſpels which have the greateſt appearance of weakneſs or error, are of peculiar force and weight with diſcerning Judges. For inſtance: the different genealogies of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, it being manifeſt that this could not be done by confederacy.

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dage, was no other than the eſtabliſh-ment of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, who was to be born of their nation; he proceeds to convince them by the moſt reſiſtleſs arguments that Jeſus was that *Meſſias*, the true Chriſt himſelf. His firſt proof is drawn from the teſti-mony of *John* the *Baptiſt*, when the Jews demanded of him if he himſelf was the perſon. *I am not he; but be-hold, there cometh one after me, whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to looſe*, ver. 25. Another at leaſt equally forcible is taken from the exact accompliſhment of the prophecies in the perſon of *Jeſus*, thoſe very prophecies which were read every ſabbath-day in their own ſynagogues. And it would be no eaſy matter to quote any one before or ſince Chriſt, who made his own ſufferings and death (thus foretold) a neceſſary part of his original plan. *Men and brethren, chil-*

dren of the ſtock of Abraham, and whoſoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this ſalvation ſent. For they that dwell at Jeruſalem, and their rulers, becauſe they know him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every ſabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. But God raiſed him from the dead, ver. 26, 27, 30.

That the *reſurrection* of *Chriſt* was itſelf a full completion of the moſt remarkable prophecies made to their anceſtors, appears from a couple which he hath ſelected out of *Pſ.* ii. 7. *Iſa.* lv. 3.

St. *Paul* having thus demonſtrated that *Jeſus* was the Meſſiah, proceeds to ſhew them what ineſtimable advantages a riſen Jeſus hath procured to all believers. *Be it known unto you, therefore,*

therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins. And by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes, ver. 38, 39. The purgations and ſacrifices of the Moſaical law did not purge the conſcience, but only took away the *political* guilt, in relation to their civil and eccleſiaſtical penalties; and ſome offences were puniſhed with death, admitting of no ſacrifice at all. The warning which this diſcourſe is cloſed with is ſufficiently weighty and alarming, and at that inſtant eſpecially needful. *Beware, therefore, leſt that come upon you which is ſpoken of in the prophets. Behold, ye deſpiſers, and periſh: for I work a work in your days, a work which you ſhall in no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you*; clearly intimating

their final deſtruction by the *Romans*.* The effects which it wrought upon the Gentile converts to the Jewiſh religion, called *Proſelytes*, were ſuch as might be reaſonably looked for from an harangue, in which the truth diffuſes on every ſide a ſtream of genuine luſtre. *And when the Jews were gone out of the ſynagogue, the Gentiles beſought that*

* The particular deſtruction of the Temple is foretold by our Saviour, *Matt.* xxiv. 2. And JOSEPHUS, l. 7. c. 18, tells us, that *Titus* ordered the ſoldiers to lay the Temple, as well as the city, even with the ground, MAIMONIDES mentions the fact of *Turnus Rufus* digging the very plot of ground on which it ſtood, with a ploughſhare. The judgments that would fall upon the nation in general, are thus expreſſed by Chriſt: *Theſe be the days of Vengeance. There ſhall be great, &c.* Luke xxi. 22, 23, 24. According to Archbiſhop USHER's Chronology, they were deſtroyed (200,000 and upwards) in ſeveral ſieges, battles, &c. in the towns and countries, beſides the great ſlaughter at Jeruſalem.

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the words might be preached to them the next ſabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proſelytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who ſpeaking to them perſuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next ſabbath-day came almoſt the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews ſaw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and ſpoke againſt thoſe things which were ſpoken by Paul, contradicting and blaſpheming. ver. 42, 43, 44, 45. For what avails ſenſe or argument with men who are not guided by either, but purely by an evil heart or perverſe will? But let them go on *contradicting* and *blaſpheming* as they liſt, the truth remains firm and unſhaken, and eagerly embraced by as many as love it, and are ſincerely deſirous to know it.

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Let me juſt infer from this diſcourſe of the great Apoſtle's, that chriſtianity is not to be repreſented as a chain of abſtract ſpeculations, or metaphyſical truths linked together in a certain form of words of human contrivance, but as a ſet of important facts, or remarkable ſcenes of the great plan of Providence, in which mankind are deeply intereſted, and which could not have been brought to light but by immediate Revelation. And when the religion of Chriſt is placed before us in this view, it will not only make it more eaſily underſtood, but alſo more eaſily defended againſt the objections of its enemies.

The man who hath a thorough reliſh for a piece of nervous and exact reaſoning, will find it gratified in a ſupreme degree upon a peruſal of that juſtly

juſtly celebrated defence of the reſurrection of the dead contained in the xvth chapter of the *Corinthians*. This fundamental article of our chriſtian belief is there eſtabliſhed as it were upon a rock, by a ſeries of the moſt invincible arguments that ever were drawn together by the pen of man. The great Apoſtle hath opened his inimitable diſcourſe with a ſummary view of the chief articles of that *faith*, by which alone we are or can be *ſaved*. *Brethren*, (ſays the commanding and perſuaſive orator) *I declare unto you the goſpel which I preached unto you, which alſo you have received, and wherein ye ſtand. For I declared unto you firſt of all, that which I alſo received*, (or learned by immediate revelation) *how that Chriſt died for our ſins according to the ſcriptures: And that he was buried, and roſe again the third day: And that*

he was ſeen of Cephas, (i. e. Peter, *Luke* xxiv. 34.) *then of the twelve.* (*John* xx. 19, 26.) *After that he was ſeen of above five hundred brethren at once*: (viz. in Galilee before his aſcenſion) *of whom the greater part remain unto this day, but ſome are fallen aſleep. After that, he was ſeen of James*; (the Lord's brother, called James the Juſt) *then of all the apoſtles* (at his aſcenſion into heaven at the Mount of Olives). *And laſt of all he was ſeen of me alſo, as of one born out of due time*, &c. about two years after his ASCENSION. ver. 1, 2, 3, &c. Having proved from ſuch a cloud of witneſſes the certainty of Chriſt's reſurrection, he proceeds to build upon it the equal certainty of our own. *Now if Chriſt* (ſays the apoſtle, whoſe *way* of *reaſoning* by negative *ſuppoſitions* is in a *peculiar* degree lively and preſſing) *be preached, that he aroſe from the dead,*

how

how ſay ſome among you, that there is no reſurrection of the dead? But if there be no reſurrection of the dead, then is Chriſt not riſen. And if Chriſt be not riſen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith alſo is vain, ye are yet in your ſins. Then they alſo who are fallen aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed, ver, 12, 13, &c. Taking now St. Paul's reaſoning out of his negative ſuppoſitions, it plainly runs thus. Since the reſurrection of Chriſt is thus ſupported by the higheſt degree of human teſtimony, it directly follows that your *faith* is *not vain*, but built as it were upon a rock; that ye are *not* in your *ſins*, but delivered from the guilt as well as dominion of them; that they alſo who are fallen aſleep in Chriſt, are *not periſhed*, but ſhall *riſe* again at the *laſt day*. A SECOND argument for the *reſurrection* of the *dead*, is drawn from

the neceſſity of a future ſtate to vindicate the divine juſtice and goodneſs. *If* (proceeds he) *in this life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable*, ver. 19. Setting aſide a life to come, the beſt of men, whom no perſecutions upon earth could tempt to forſake their God, would be the greateſt loſers by their exiſtence. It is no uncommon thing at all for the greateſt ſaints to become the moſt remarkable inſtances of ſuffering here below. A THIRD proof is taken from that *analogy* between the firſt and ſecond Adam, which the Jewiſh gainſayers of the *Sadducaical* party could not but allow from their own ſcriptures. *Since by man came death, by man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*, ver. 21, 22. The appearance of our Lord

and Saviour was in conſequence of an original plan of Providence laid before the world began. 2 *Tim.* i. 9, 10. A few intermediate verſes being taken up with that glorious diſplay of regal power which ſhall put an end to the mediatorial kingdom or government of Chriſt, two freſh arguments for the reſurrection of the dead are couched in thoſe vehement and preſſing interrogatories that follow. *Elſe what ſhall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead riſe not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? And why ſtand we in jeopardy every hour?* Upon a ſuppoſition that there was no reſurrection, your baptiſmal vow would be perfectly abſurd; and as many as expoſe themſelves to death for righteouſneſs ſake, might deſervedly be pronounced fools and madmen. *I proteſt* (adds he emphatically) *by your rejoic-*

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ing which I have in Chriſt Jeſus (i. e. by all that joyous hope which you and I have in our belief of the reſurrection) *I die daily* (or run the riſque of it.) *If after the manner of men I have fought with beaſts* (upon the theatre) *at Epheſus, what advantageth it me, if the dead riſe not?* ver. 31, 32. Upon that ſuppoſition the diſciples of Epicurus act a wiſer part, whoſe known maxim it is, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* But do ye yourſelves hold ſuch principles and their advocates in that contempt which they deſerve. *Be not deceived: Evil communications corrupt good manners. For ſome* (meaning their new teachers) *have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to their ſhame.*

The apoſtle now turning away from his Jewiſh converts, who had been perplexed with objections to a future ſtate by

by the Sadducees, addreſſes himſelf to the Gentiles, who had been taught by their philoſophical maſters, that the reſurrection of the body was a doctrine altogether viſionary and chimerical. Hear him arguing for the ſame numerical body riſing again at the laſt day, upon the received philoſophy, that corruption precedes generation, and from the eaſy inſtances of new grain and new plants from the minute particles of ſeed. *But ſome man will ſay, how are the dead raiſed up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened except it die. And that which thou ſoweſt, thou ſoweſt not that body that ſhall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of ſome other grain. But God giveth it,* &c. ver. 35, 36, 37, &c. Your profound and ſagacious philoſophers, who look upon the reſurrection of the body

as an abſurd and impoſſible thing, becauſe they are not able to comprehend how a body fit for a glorified ſoul can be raiſed out of a corrupt maſs of matter, may, by a parity of reaſon, conſider the production of a plant or grain as equally abſurd or impoſſible, becauſe they are not able to comprehend how the ſeed which rots in the ground compoſes the germen or bud of a plant. And ſurely he deſerves to be ſet down for a *fool* who will not admit, that the ſame divine power which effects the one, may juſt as eaſily effect the other. To re-collect the ſame eſſential particles or atoms, however diſperſed, is at leaſt not a thing more difficult in itſelf, than to *faſhion the members* in *the womb*, as *yet being imperfect*. *All fleſh*, he goes on, *is not the ſame fleſh; but there is one kind of*, *&c.* ver. 39, 40. And will the diſ-

puters of this world go about to explain, how the different make and contexture of animals, together with the ſun, planets, and fixed ſtars, could be produced out of the like maſs, and all originally out of nothing, any more than how this *corruptible* ſhall put on *incorruption*; and this *mortal* ſhall put on *immortality*. He that at firſt clothed us with animal and mortal bodies, derived from the firſt man, Adam, can alſo endue them with the ſpiritual and immortal qualities of the ſecond Adam, our heavenly Lord. *It is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in incorruption: It is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed, &c.* ver. 42, 43, &c. Our comprehending or not comprehending how it is *thus raiſed*, does in no wiſe render ſuch a reſurrection at all the more true and certain in itſelf, nor conſequently the more or leſs credible. And to reject

this, or any other article of the chriſtian belief, becauſe it is *unfathomable* by the ſhort *line* of reaſon, is in effect no more or leſs than to tell God that we are fixed not to believe a letter he ſays purely upon his *own word.*

Having committed our bodies to the ground as a ſafe repoſitory, the apoſtle reveals to us a *truth* or two, which can hardly fail to impreſs a peculiar awe and reverence upon the moſt ſluggiſh and careleſs reader. *Now this I ſay, brethren, that fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I ſhew you a myſtery*; (i. e. reveal to you a truth which your own unaſſiſted reaſon could never have helped you to): *We ſhall not all ſleep*; (or die, for as many as are alive at Chriſt's ſecond coming ſhall not die at all) *but we*

ſhall

ſhall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, (for the trumpet ſhall ſound) and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed (changed by having the powers of ſenſe and reaſon that we are now endued with greatly ſtrengthened, or ſuch new faculties ſuper-added, as are ſuitable to the objects of a life to come. ver. 50, 51, 52. Liſten to now, and, liſtening, join in that rapturous ſong of victory and triumph over the grave which follows: *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin; and the ſtrength of ſin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* ver. 55, 56, 57, &c. A diſcourſe which contains in it all that cloſeneſs of appeal, all that pathos of addreſs, all that force and abruptneſs of interro-

gation, all that clearneſs, ſtrength, and brevity of precept and argument, which make up the ſum of true genuine oratory, is ſhut up with a practical inference, of all others the moſt juſt, moving, and emphatical: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* *

How

* Obſerve the incomparable addreſs of St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to the Romans. The preſumption of the Roman converts made it neceſſary for him to give ſome explanation of the caſe of the Jews; but then it was the moſt difficult ſubject in the world to ſpeak upon: It would have been a hard ſaying to have told theſe men, juſt recovered from the darkneſs of the Gentile world to the knowledge of the one *true God*, to have told them at once and directly, that this darkneſs, of two thouſand years continuance, had been the effect of the divine decree; and that the ſame decree

How poor and trifling do all the gueſſes, even of a SOCRATES or TULLY ſhew, when contraſted with a chain of evidences ſo plain and forcible as is here linked together by a PAUL. SOCRATES, a little before his death, tells his friends "He had good hope of "ſome ſort of Being, when this life "was at an end;" but after that he ſpeaks doubtfully and ſays, "Though

decree had now determined to blind Judah his ſervant, his meſſenger whom he had choſen. What a ſituation was the apoſtle in? And how has he conducted himſelf in it? Why, he *argues* very largely from the *ſecondary* cauſe, and yet at the ſame time keeps the *primary* one always in ſight. *What ſhall we ſay then? That the Gentiles, &c.* This, we ſee, is the *ſecondary cauſe*, their belief of the perpetuity of Moſes' Inſtitute: In the very next words he gives the primary one, which was the divine preſcience. *As it is written, behold I lay in Sion a ſtumbling-block, and a rock of offence.* How curious is this!

CHARLES on the Diſperſion.

" he ſhould be miſtaken, he did at " leaſt gain thus much, that the ex- " pectation of it made him leſs un- " eaſy while he lived, and his error " would die with him." And he concludes, " I am going out of the world, " and you are to continue in it; which " has the better part, is a ſecret to " every one but God."

PLATO in Phœd. in Apol. Soc.

CICERO (Tuſcul. ix. l. 1.) ſpeaking of the ſeveral opinions concerning the nature and duration of the ſoul, ſays, " Which of theſe is true, God alone " knows; and which is moſt proba- " ble, a very great queſtion." And he introduces one, complaining, " That " while he was reading the arguments " for the immortality of the ſoul, he " thought himſelf convinced; but as " ſoon as he laid aſide the book, and

" began to reaſon with himſelf, his " conviction was gone." What are all the philoſophical reaſonings drawn from the nature of the ſoul, or the inſtincts and preſages of *immortality* implanted in it, if brought into competition with only half a dozen expreſs words dictated by the Spirit of God? *Now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept*, is abundantly ſufficient to remove every *doubt* and *uncertainty* from the human breaſt. And how ſupremely bleſt are thoſe who *ſtand faſt in that faith*, which hath rode triumphant over all the kings of the earth who have taken counſel together againſt it; which hath deſtroyed and aboliſhed ſo many rooted ſuperſtitions; which hath been ſealed with the blood of ſo many glorious martyrs; and againſt which all the

the powers of hell never have been, or ever will be able to prevail.*

That

* The learned BLACKWALL obſerving how the whole frame of the ſacred volumes is cramped and disfigured, and its reaſonings weakened by the wrong diviſions of chapters and verſes, has collected the following inſtances:

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the ſecond epiſtle to the *Corinthians* intirely relate to the ſubject, and ought not to have been ſeparated by a formal diviſion, as they are in all our books and tranſlations; but to have been laid together, that the connexion of the matter, the ſtrength of the argument, the dependence and harmony of the ſeveral parts of the diſcourſe, and the noble beauty and propriety of the language, might fully and clearly appear.

The 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th verſes of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, chap. i. ſhould be join'd (putting θελπατῆσαι ὑμᾶς, i. e. εἰς τὸ ὃν, ἕνεκα τῆ θελπατῆσαι ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τῆ Κυείυ εἰς πᾶᾶ ἀρίσκειαν) into

That the writings of this apoſtle, as well as the reſt, were divinely inſpired, is roundly declared by the chriſ-

into a parentheſis: Upon this connexion how clear would the conſtruction be! which, upon the preſent diviſion, ſeems diſturbed and intangled; how round the period! how vigorous and divine the ſenſe!

That grand and eloquent paſſage of St. *Paul*, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 10, 11, 12. is diſmembered and entirely broken by that unnatural and abſurd diviſion. Lay it all together in its proper connexion, nothing produces a nobler ſenſe, nothing yields a harmony more agreeable to an ear that can reliſh ſuch charms. Ὃ ἕνα ἕκαστον ὑμῶν has been ſtruck out by one (whoſe head was not ſo happily organized) out of a weak fear that ὑμᾶς following would make it a tautology. We have formerly ſhewed that ſuch repetitions are agreeable to the uſage of the beſt authors, ſometimes neceſſary, generally emphatical and moving; to which add, Ἐμοὶ μὲν, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθ' Ἑλλήνων χθόνα τεθράμμεθ', ἀλλ' ἔν ξυνετά μοι δοκῶ γέρων.

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tians of the moſt early ages. CLEMENT, (Ep. i.) a fellow-labourer of St. *Paul*, writes thus to the Corinthians. " The " apoſtles delivered the Goſpel to us " from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Jeſus " Chriſt from God. Wherefore, Chriſt " was ſent by God, and the apoſtles " by Chriſt. The Epiſtle of the bleſſed " apoſtle Paul was *aſſuredly ſent* to you " by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit."

POLYCARP, who was the diſciple of St. *John*, and lived till 167, writes thus to the *Philippians* concerning St. Paul. " Being preſent he taught you the word " of truth with all exactneſs and ſound- " neſs; and being abſent, wrote an " Epiſtle to you, which if you look " into, you may be *built up* in the " *faith* that was delivered to you." Quoting ſome paſſages which are expreſsly found in the Evangeliſts, he introduces

introduces them thus: *The Lord hath ſaid.* IRENÆUS, who was a diſciple of POLYCARP, and lived till the year 202, (l. ii. c. 47.) ſays, that the Scriptures were dictated by the word of God, and his Spirit; and that one and the ſame Spirit preached in the Prophets, and publiſhed in the Apoſtles, (l. iii. c. 25.) In one whole chapter he ſhews, that the other apoſtles, as well as *Paul,* had their knowledge by revelation from God. (xiii.) JUSTIN MARTYR, in the ſame century, ſpeaks of the Scriptures as writings full of the Holy Ghoſt. *Dial. with* Trypho. In the next century, CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS (Strom. l. i.) ſays, "The "apoſtles might well be called *pro-* "*phets* and *righteous,* one and the "ſame holy *Spirit* working in them "all."

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The ſucceſs which followed upon a *Paul*'s preaching the glad tidings of the *Goſpel*, is incredible. The Chriſtian Hero, putting on the whole armory of God, ſpread his conqueſts far and wide over the whole Gentile world, even from *Aſia* to the extremities of *Europe*. Athens and Rome, Corinth and Epheſus, bear united teſtimony to the ſignal victories he gained over the minds and hearts of numbers. Thouſands and ten thouſands detached themſelves from their falſe divinities, and, what is ſtill more wonderful from the falſe maxims of the world, purely for the ſake of confeſſing and adoring an humble and crucified Jeſus. Our bleſſed Lord himſelf did not receive ſo extenſive a commiſſion as St. Paul did. *I am not ſent*, ſays he, *but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*, Matt. xv. 24. Many a ſecret

a ſecret is contained in his admirable Epiſtles which the Son of God had never revealed to men, becauſe they were then not able to bear them. And if his reaſonings in a few places ſhould at this diſtance of time appear rather intricate and perplexed, it ought to be laid either to our not being acquainted with the *principles* which he builds them upon, or not attending to the *conceſſions* of thoſe adverſaries he is reaſoning with, or overlooking that *change of perſons* which is ſo familiar with him. A *mind* ſo crowded with ideas, and deſirous of imparting them, is naturally apt to accumulate words, involving one clauſe and ſentence in another. Add to this, that as the condition of the firſt churches had ſomething in it *peculiar* to themſelves, thoſe parts which eſpecially related to it might well be expected to carry ſome degree of obſcu-

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rity in them. And as long as his writings are ſufficiently clear to the moſt *ignorant* and *unlearned* in all thoſe points of doctrine and practice, which are calculated for general uſe, we cannot ſet too high a value upon them.

St. Peter, who writes with the authority of the firſt man in the college of the apoſtles, is eminent for ſtrength of argument, clearneſs of conſequence, and exactneſs of method. The diſcourſe, in which he vindicates that miraculous event of the *deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon the apoſtles* from the calumnies raiſed upon it by the Jews, contains in it ſuch cloſe and preſſing arguments, as are hardly to be withſtood. He firſt ſhews, that the *marvellous gift of languages*, which the diſciples were endued with, was no other than a full completion of a famous

mous prophecy of *Joel*, c. iii. ver. 28. *Peter lift up his voice, and ſaid unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jeruſalem, be this known to you, and hearken to my words: For theſe men are not drunken, as ye ſuppoſe, ſeeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was ſpoken by the prophet Joel*, Acts ii. 14, 15, 16. Having repeated to them both the promiſes and threats of ſo famous a prophecy, Peter calls upon them all to weigh ſeriouſly how exactly the former of them was accompliſhed in the *perſon, miracles, reſurrection*, and *aſcenſion* of Chriſt, and in theſe powers of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon his apoſtles and diſciples. *Ye men of Iſrael, hear theſe words; Jeſus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, &c. &c.* ver. 22, 23, 24, 25, &c. Mark the effect which ſo convincing a diſcourſe had upon thoſe *Jews* who were

preſent and heard it. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and ſaid unto Peter, and to the reſt of the apoſtles, Men and brethren, what ſhall we do? Then Peter ſaid to them, Repent and be baptized in the name of Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. For the promiſe is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call,* ver. 37, 38, 39. Although a *viſion* was afterwards neceſſary to give the apoſtle a more clear and explicit knowledge of God's purpoſe of calling in the Gentiles, *Acts* x. yet even in this diſcourſe to the Jews, immediately after the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, he plainly ſhews, that in general he ſaw the full extent of his commiſſion. Indeed, the univerſality of the kingdom of Chriſt makes a conſtant ſub-

ject of prophecy, from the firſt preaching of the Goſpel unto Abraham, *Gen.* xii. 3. to the ſealing up of the viſion by the revelation given to St. John, *Rev.* xiv. 6. *Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the ſame day there were added to them about three thouſand ſouls,* ver. 41.

The ſame apoſtle's *diſcourſe* to the *Jews,* upon the *miraculous cure of a lame man,* is highly to be admired; a diſcourſe by which five thouſand were converted to the *chriſtian religion. Ye men of Iſrael, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye ſo earneſtly on us, as though by our own power or holineſs we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jeſus, whom ye delivered up, and denied in the preſence of Pilate,*

when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the holy One, and desired a murderer to be granted you, and killed the Prince of life, ver. 12—26. The noble *vehemence* and *fervor* of his spirit in placing their crime with all its aggravations full in their view; his exalted *charity* in being willing to lay it to their *ignorance,* and prejudices against the meanness of his person and appearance; his earnest desire to have them still embrace and live up to the religion of that murdered Lord, *whom the heaven had received till the times of restitution of all things,* cannot be sufficiently applauded. His stile is simple and majestic, the natural result of an unfeigned love for his dear master, and disinterested regard for the salvation of his hearers. *Acts* iii. Let me just remark, that this apostle, in his first discourse to the Jews, immediately after

the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, plainly ſhews that in general he ſaw the full extent of his commiſſion, although a future viſion gave him a more explicit and clear knowledge of God's purpoſe of calling in the *Gentiles*. *For the promiſe*, ſays he, *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off*, (c. ii. 39) however *ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe*.

His bold apology before the chief prieſts of the great council, and the Roman captain, who cauſed him to be put in priſon, is worthy of himſelf. *Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Iſrael, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known to you all, that by the name of Jeſus Chriſt, whom ye crucified, &c.* Acts iv. 8, 9, &c. Upon being forbid to *teach* in the *name*

of *Chriſt Jeſus*, whom they were fixed not to believe in, at the peril of their lives, liſten to a reply on the part of Peter and John, which could only proceed from that uncommon magnanimity of ſoul which ſo ſtrongly marked their character: *Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken to you more than unto God, judge ye.* ver. 19.

St. STEPHEN, whoſe peculiar glory and diſtinction it was to lead the noble army of martyrs, is a fine *reaſoner*. His defence, upon being charged with blaſphemy againſt the *Jewiſh* religion, for affirming that Chriſt would deſtroy the temple and abrogate the ceremonial law, is worthy of the higheſt encomiums. With what invincible ſtrength of argument does he make it appear that God never intended to confine his true worſhip and religion to the land of Canaan,

naan, nor his divine preſence to the temple of Jeruſalem. Liſten to the proofs which are drawn by him from their own ſcriptures, in the ſeveral periods from *Abraham* to *Moſes*, and from *Moſes* to the building of the Temple. *Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken: The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Meſopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And ſaid unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I ſhall ſhew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell.* Acts vii. ver. 2, 3, 4, &c. With what keenneſs of reſentment, what emphaſis of reproof, does he turn upon thoſe who were ſtill fixed at any rate to perſiſt in their incredulity. *Ye*

ſtiff-necked, and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt: as your fathers did, ſo do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers perſecuted? and they have ſlain them which ſhewed before of the coming of the juſt One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the diſpoſition of angels, and have not kept it. ver. 51, 52, 53. Can we poſſibly wonder at the powerful effects which ſuch an apology wrought upon their minds and hearts, *When they heard theſe things they were cut to the heart, and they gnaſhed on him with their teeth.* ver. 54.

Of how different a ſtamp and character from thoſe of our Saviour and his apoſtles, are the weak, inaccurate, diffuſive reaſonings of the many. Vague indeterminate ideas, random half meanings,

ings, and a barren ſuperfluity of words, make up the ſum of their thin demonſtrations, their lame and feeble oratory. Retailing a few ſcraps of common-place ſentiments, they paſs over all that is eſſential or intereſting in the ſubject which they handle. Inſtead of treating upon uſeful, practical ſubjects, they ſhall chooſe to involve or loſe both themſelves and their hearers in a labyrinth of diſpute upon uneſſential ſpeculative points: Inſtead of handling thoſe fundamental doctrines themſelves in a practical manner, by a pointed application to their *hearers*, they ſhall treat them in a way altogether ſpeculative, by couching them in general indefinite terms, or abſtract propoſitions: * Inſtead of explaining the limits

* The general way, ſays TILLOTSON, is, as if a phyſician, inſtead of applying particular *remedies*

mits and compaſs of any ſpecial virtue, they ſhall put them off with a few perfunctory ſuperficial remarks, concerning that virtue at large: Inſtead of unfolding the ſeveral parts of a truth fully and diſtinctly, they ſhall find it more eaſy and convenient to give them as it were a ſide-view of it, by laying it down in a brief and ſummary way: Inſtead of confining themſelves to that branch of *morals*, or article of *belief*, which the *text* ſuggeſts, they ſhall be apt to ſkip, in a deſultory manner, from one thing to another, ſo as to leave an audience utterly at a loſs to ſay what they have been talking about.

medies to the diſtemper of his patient, ſhould entertain him with a long diſcourſe of diſeaſes in general, and of the pleaſure and advantages of health, and earneſtly perſuade him to be well without taking his particular diſeaſe into conſideration, and preſcribing remedies for it.

Their

Their arguments in giddy circles run
Still round and round, and end where they begun;
No parts diſtinct, or general ſchemes we find,
But one wild ſhapeleſs monſter of the mind.

It is really a penance to liſten to a diſcourſe of half an hour long, which proves nothing, and ſays nothing. The preacher ſhall dilate, till he is confuſed; explain, till he is obſcure; repeat, till he becomes nauſeous and diſguſting. BRUYERE hath humourouſly enough decyphered your orators of this claſs, after the following ſort: "There "are three things which theſe men "ſhall never fail to cry are abſolutely "neceſſary, and infinitely worth your "attention: one thing they prove in "the firſt part of their diſcourſe, ano-"ther in the ſecond, and another in "the third. So that you are to be "convinced of one truth, and that is

"their

" their firſt point of doctrine; of ano-
" ther truth, and that's their ſecond;
" and then of a third truth, and that's
" their third point. In this manner,
" the firſt reflection will inſtruct you
" in one of the fundamental principles
" of their religion; the ſecond, in
" another principle which is no leſs
" fundamental; and the laſt reflection
" in a third laſt principle, which is
" the moſt important of them all; but
" which, for want of leiſure, is re-
" ſerved to another opportunity. In
" fine, to recollect what has been
" ſaid, to abridge this diviſion, and
" to form a ſcheme of——What ſtill,
" cry you, new matter, new prepa-
" ration for a diſcourſe of an *hour*
" *longer!* 'Tis in vain; the more theſe
" gentlemen ſtrive to clear it to me,
" the leſs I ſhall underſtand it: It is

" really a penance to behold them la-
" bouring through a confuſed maſs of
" words, and entangled in their own
" argument; throwing themſelves into
" every unnatural poſture, in order, if
" poſſible, to make their way into
" ſenſe and meaning. Such men want
" the neceſſary pains to inveſtigate;
" the proper attention to examine; or
" the due penetration requiſite to de-
" termine the truth."

I ſhall conclude this firſt part with obſerving, that the remark of that ſagacious and profound writer Mr. LOCKE, is only juſt when confined to that race of orators who have nothing but ſpeculative truth in view. " All the arts
" of rhetorick beſide order and clear-
" neſs; all the artificial and figurative
" application of words eloquence hath
" invented,

" invented, are for nothing elſe but " to inſinuate wrong ideas, move the " paſſions, and thereby miſlead the " judgment."

PART

PART II.

THE buſineſs of a CHRISTIAN ORATOR is not merely to explain the *word of God*, but to do it in ſuch a manner as to give his hearers a thorough ſenſe of, and proper reliſh for it. The naked truth ſtripped of every ornament which the *imagination* is able to lend it, ſhall, with all its charms, be little heeded by the *many*. Its pure and delicate light does not enough ſtrike that which there is of *ſenſible* in man. Objects ſo remote from ſenſe and matter as moral and divine truths are, require to be brought near the mind, and made familiar to it by ſtrength of

imagery.

imagery. The rational faculty indeed cannot but be very deficient in its operations, unleſs it is united with a ſtrong imagination, ſince reaſon alone is not able to ſearch out new ideas, but can only compare and diſtinguiſh thoſe which ſenſe and imagination preſent to her. *

The great and chief difficulty conſiſts in knowing how to make a due

* Rhetorick is ſubſervient to the imagination, as logick is to the underſtanding. And the office and duty of rhetorick is no other than to apply and commend the dictates of reaſon to the imagination, for the better moving of the appetite and will. The affections make ſuch revolts, and raiſe up ſuch mutinies, that reaſon would be forcibly led away into ſervitude and captivity, if the perſuaſion of eloquence did not win the imagination from the AFFECTIONS part, and contract a *league* between reaſon and imagination againſt the affections.

BACON's Advancement of Learning.

ſeparation

ſeparation between thoſe graces and ornaments which, being natural and genuine, do ſet off and adorn the truth, and thoſe which being ſpurious and foreign do only tend to weaken and debaſe it. That beautiful ſimplicity which we ſo much admire in the compoſitions of the ancients, is perfectly conſiſtent with the former, but altogether repugnant to the latter.

The *Grecian Orator* (whoſe eloquence alone raiſed him a ſort of throne, and fixed the hearts of a whole republick in him) ſeeks for no ornaments but what ariſe naturally from the ſubject in hand, makes uſe of no flowers but what offer themſelves of their own accord. Having no other paſſion but the love of *truth* itſelf, he diſdains to render her leſs beautiful or *effeminate* by tricking her up with painted me-

retricious graces. By an energy of thought and vehemence peculiar to himſelf, he was able to raiſe that ſpirit, and excite thoſe affections, which he was deſirous to raiſe and excite. The true intereſt of the *people* to whom he addreſſed himſelf being ever uppermoſt in his view and thoughts, he ſeems to forget or loſe ſight of himſelf. The *ſalvation* of his country being the ſole and ultimate end of all his finiſhed orations, the applauſe which reſulted from thence to himſelf appears to be much beneath his regard. How infinitely worthy, in all theſe reſpects, is the *Grecian* of being imitated by every *Chriſtian Orator*. How far is it beneath the latter to be ſtudiouſly hunting after thoſe frivolous, puerile, affected ornaments which were rejected with contempt by the former. Of this ſort are the flaſhing metaphor, the brilliant

ſimile, the luxuriant allegory, the florid epithet, the contraſted phraſe, and the remote alluſion. All theſe pitiful embelliſhments, which are ſo induſtriouſly ſought out, and ſo highly admired by little *fanciful* writers, only ſerve to corrupt and debaſe the truth. They may be reſembled to the *plaiſtering* of *marble*, or the *painting* of *gold*, the glory of which is to be ſeen, and to ſhine by no other luſtre but their own. Such an effeminate ſtudy of beauty is (according to the moſt judicious and elegant of * critics) no other than taking pains to be ugly or deformed.

* Fucata muliebriter, fœdiſſima ſunt ipſo formæ labore. Illa tranſlucida & verſicolor quorundam elocutio res ipſas effœminat, quæ illo verborum habitu veſtiuntur. Plerumque optima rebus cohærent, & cernuntur ſuo lumine.

QUINTIL. l. viii. Proem.

The ſolidity and grandeur of the ſubjects which are handled, is that which forms the character of true and perfect eloquence. Such is the native and inherent greatneſs of thoſe *topics* which belong to the *Chriſtian Orator*, that they will hardly admit of, and are very liable to be ſullied by, ornaments in general. The glorious attributes of God, the aſtoniſhing exertion or diſplay of his wiſdom, goodneſs, juſtice and power, in the work of our redemption, an endleſs and inconceivable ſtate of rewards and puniſhments in a world to come, the reſurrection of our bodies at the laſt day, the ſtupendous awfulneſs of a *future* judgment, *when the ſon of man ſhall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and before him ſhall be gathered all nations*, are a ſort of truths which ſtand in need of no foreign embelliſhments. The purity,

majeſty, and energy of them, are ſure to be diminiſhed by *florid epithets*, *brilliant metaphors*, or *uſeleſs circumlocutions*. All *graces* muſt be utterly excluded, except of that kind which may be ſaid decently to adorn without encumbering, and modeſtly to ſhine without glaring. In fine, the imagination does its proper office, when it is made uſe of as a handmaid to *truth*, neither over-dreſſing her, nor leaving her wholly naked. *

Amongſt

* Let the hardeſt hearted man read the hiſtory of our Bible, as, how *Iſaac* was led to be ſacrificed, how *Joſeph* became known to his brethren, or how *David* was grieved at the death of *Abſalom*, and (if they will ſay the truth) they ſhall feel a certain ſhuddering in their bodies, a certain yearning in their hearts, a certain tender affection all at one inſtant, far greater than if all the oracles of Rome or Athens ſhould preach the ſame matter whole days together. Let them read the ſame ſtories in JOSEPHUS (to whom Titus cauſed an image to be ſet up for the elegancy of his

Amongſt the race of *Orators*, whoſe fancy was full apt to *catch* and *blaze* out in *metaphor*, *ſimile*, and the like, I ſhall ſingle out the diſtinguiſhed names of SEED and STERNE.

SEED is full of thoſe ambitious ornaments, which the leaſt pure among the *Ancients* were ſo paſſionately fond of. Almoſt every page abounds with turns both of phraſe and ſentiment. A juſt ſimplicity is deſerted for the florid colourings of ſtyle, contraſted phraſes, trivial conceits, briſk and ſparkling ſimilitudes, which are no other than

hiſtory) and they ſhall find, that after his enriching them with all the ornaments of rhetorick, he hath left them far more cold than he found them. And that is, becauſe true beauty wants no painting; and, as jewellers ſay, the fairer any precious ſtone is, the leſs does it need of gold and workmanſhip.

MORNAY.

the

the mere trappings of compoſition. His trim, polite, and ſpirited diſcourſes, are like the *Tarpeian* maid, overwhelmed and cruſhed by theſe ſplendid trifles. "Take (ſays CAUSIN, Eloq. l. 2. c. 9.) "ſome curious landſkip of woods, "groves, hills, fountains, and what-"ever you can imagine capable of "furniſhing out a pleaſing object. It "will pleaſe you at firſt more than "nature itſelf. The painted birds upon "every bough, ſhall ſtrike your eye "with a more agreeable view than to "ſee the ſame in reality. But nature "ſoon reſumes the preference, and is "more permanent in the pleaſure it "affords."

To quote a few inſtances of thoſe little turns of ſentiment and expreſſion which ſo frequently occur in this pleaſing writer. "Men, ſays he, miſplace

" their diſcontent; they are very well
" *ſatisfied* with what they *are*, they
" are only *diſſatisfied* with what they
" *have*; whereas the very reverſe ought
" generally to take place.——We ſee
" how *much* a man *has*, and therefore
" we ſome of us *envy* him; but we
" *ſee* not (what is often the caſe) how
" *little* he *enjoys*, and *therefore* we do
" not *pity* him. And yet we might
" *ſee* it too, if we did but obſerve him
" giving evident proofs, that he does
" not *enjoy* himſelf by his conſtant en-
" deavour to *forget* himſelf in variety
" of company and diverſions—Nothing
" more irkſome to him, than being *long*
" at *home*, except it be the entering
" into a *nearer* home, his own *breaſt*."

S. 6. And again, " We are firſt *un-*
" *eaſy*, becauſe we imagine we *want*
" ſuch things; and when we are in
" poſſeſſion of them we are uneaſy,

" becauſe

" becauſe we find ſuch things *wanting*
" in themſelves. Which of the two
" is the moſt pitiable object, he who
" goes to other men's doors to beg
" his *daily* bread, or he who goes thi-
" ther to beg his *daily* happineſs, be-
" ing too poor to furniſh out his own
" entertainment? He, whoſe company
" is an inſupportable burthen to him-
" ſelf, is very much obliged to the
" good-nature and eaſineſs of his com-
" panions, that it is not an inſupport-
" able burthen to them too." S. 8.
" One can ſcarce believe that a ra-
" tional man can *love* himſelf, without
" loving ſomebody beſide himſelf. For
" he could find nothing in himſelf
" worth loving, if he was of that
" unloving and *unlovely* temper." It
is really matter of aſtoniſhment, that a
writer of his parts and rank ſhould

prefer

prefer ſuch poor frigid conceits before ſolid ſenſe and elegant expreſſion.

The ſimilitudes and alluſions (which are ſown much too thick in almoſt every diſcourſe) can anſwer no ſingle end in the world but to *amuſe* the *fancy*. Speaking of *youth* that roam from folly to folly, he ſays, "The "fire of a glowing imagination (the "property of youth) may make folly "look pleaſing, and lend a beauty to "objects which have none inherent in "them: juſt as the ſun-beams may "paint a cloud, and diverſify it with "beautiful ſtains of light, however "dark, unſubſtantial, and empty in "itſelf." S. 8. And again, "Vice is, "perhaps, nothing but the ſmother-"ing and ſtifling the beams of divine "grace, as *blackneſs* is nothing but "the abſorbing and ſuffocating the "rays

" rays of light." S. 10. Where he is talking of certain men who lead the *lives* of *hermits*, that others, without remorſe of *conſcience*, may ſpend theirs in debauchery, teaching people to be wicked upon principle, he ſays, " The " moon, that glides along in ſilence " with a pale, ſerene, and ſober light, " yet is the cauſe of all the working " and ſwelling of the deep, is a pro- " per emblem of theſe men, who, at the " ſame time that they ſeem to be un- " concerned ſpectators, without mixing " with the world, are yet the great " occaſions by the principles which " they propagate of the vice which " prevails in it." And again, " Though " a boiſterous paſſion may be, for a " while, more powerful than reaſon, " yet the latter, if duly exerted, will, " in proceſs of time, weaken and re- " duce its exorbitant power; juſt as

" though

" though men in a delirium and frenzy " may be ſtronger than thoſe in their " ſober ſenſes, yet the latter ſeldom " fail of ſubduing and binding the " former." S. 7. Theſe glitterings or *lumina orationes*, with which every diſcourſe is beſprinkled, may afford ſome little entertainment to the imagination, but will not at all contribute towards charming the boiſterous and rebellious *paſſions*, or delivering a *bewildered reaſon* from error and prejudice. The hearers riſe as from a painted banquet, going away juſt as empty or void of ſpiritual food as they ſet down to it. In peruſing the ſermons of this florid and ingenious writer, one can hardly forbear calling to mind and applying thoſe lines of the moral and didactic Poet:

Falſe

False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay.

Essay on Criticism.

QUINTILIAN compares such discourses to *armies*, wherein; if the *knap-sack* boys are too numerous, they only hinder the march, and by doubling the number are far enough from doubling the strength. Inf. l. viii. c. 6.

Of how different and superior a kind to the tinsel ornaments of a glowing imagination are certain graces which are drawn from the store-house of nature itself, *graces* which are never known to fade or grow old, *graces* which are in no wise subject to variation, or adapted to a prevailing mode, *graces* which will bear a thousand views and

reviews.

reviews. Let me juſt ſubjoin, that the diſcourſes of SEED upon the *evidences* of the chriſtian religion (at Lady MOYER's lecture) are not only compoſed with extenſive erudition, but diveſted of thoſe *rhetorical* flowers which ſuperabound in the reſt.

STERNE, whoſe predominant faculty was a florid and vigorous imagination, hath adulterated the word of God with a vicious mixture of foreign or unnatural ornaments. Looſe ſparkles of wit, luxuriant deſcriptions, ſmart antitheſes, pointed ſentiments, epigrammatical turns or expreſſions, are frequently to be met with. The great truths of the Goſpel are enervated by the ſupernumerary decorations of ſtile and eloquence. In fine, his oratory is decked in all the glowing colours of poetry, as it firſt appeared in *Greece*.

To

To quote a few paſſages, which can only be looked upon as ſo many ſportive plays of fancy, that the *heart* and *affections* have no ſort of ſhare upon earth in: "Truth, like a modern matron, ſcorns art, and diſdains to preſs herſelf forward into the circle to be ſeen.——Give but the *outlines* of a *ſtory*, let *ſpleen* or *prudery* ſnatch the pencil, and they will finiſh it with ſo many hard ſtrokes, and with ſo dirty a colouring, that candor and courteſy will ſit in torture as they look at it. Gentle and virtuous ſpirits, ye who know not what it is to be rigid interpreters, but of your own failings, to you I addreſs myſelf, the unhired advocates for the conduct of the miſguided: whence is it that the world is not more zealous of your office? Vol. 3. S. 3. Again, ſpeaking of the abuſes of conſcience, our author, who

who is quite licentious in the perſonification of abſtract terms, breaks forth, "Was it certain that *ſelf-love* could "never hang the leaſt bias upon the "judgment; could no ſuch thing as "*favour* and *affection* enter the ſacred "court; did *wit* diſdain to take a bribe "in it, or was aſhamed to ſhew its "face as an advocate for an unwarrant-"able enjoyment; or, laſtly, were we "aſſured, that *intereſt* ſtood always un-"concerned while the cauſe was hear-"ing, and that paſſion never got into "the judgment and pronounced ſen-"tence inſtead of reaſon, no doubt "the religious and moral ſtate of man "would be what he himſelf eſteemed it."

"Vol. 4. S. 12. Such ſparkling *pret-tineſſes* may be taking enough with one ſet of readers, who exerciſe no ſingle faculty but that of their *fancy*; but are they in any degree calculated to make them

them either wiſer or better? Do they bring conviction to the underſtanding or judgment? Do they either reach the heart, or ſeem to proceed from it? Do they ſerve any other purpoſe than to fix the attention upon themſelves, and their ingenious writer? A preacher of this turn would not forego his inordinate deſire of *ſhining*, even at the rate of ſaving half a dozen ſouls alive. The ſinews of an argument which he ſometimes makes uſe of, are apt to be relaxed and enervated with the *oil* of his *eloquence*; and his expreſſions ſhall be now and then ſtrained above nature, and recede too much from the familiar forms of ſpeech. The quaint and pithy ſentences which follow, are truly worthy of a YORICK, who hath nothing in view but to raiſe a ſmile of ſcorn and deriſion. Making mention of *Solomon*, who "had unfortunately miſcalculated

" his wants, in having ſeven hundred " wives and three hundred concubines," he exclaims, " Wiſe, deluded man! was it " not that thou madeſt ſome amends " for thy bad practice by thy good " preaching, what had become of thee? " *Three hundred!* but let us turn aſide " from ſo ſad a ſtumbling-block." The ſame inſatiable *luſt* of being *witty*, betrayed him into that vein of emptineſs, or fond impertinence, with which he introduces a diſcourſe upon this text, *And when he aroſe in the morning, behold it was Leah.*

The exordium of " That I deny," in another ſermon upon the words of Solomon, *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to, &c.* is altogether foreign to the dignity both of the place and ſubject, having no better pretenſions to good humour than to good ſenſe.

The

The truth of the matter is, that a man who will be aiming at peſtilent *wit*, both in *ſeaſon* and out of *ſeaſon*, muſt, and will of courſe, fall into many a flat and childiſh conceit. This applauded writer, how ſuperior ſoever to numbers in the art of making up pleaſant pictures and agreeable viſions in the fancy, by putting thoſe ideas together with quickneſs and variety, in which there can be formed any reſemblance, is notwithſtanding far inferior to others in the ſtill more neceſſary and uſeful talent of ſeparating thoſe ideas in which can be found the leaſt difference. That he hath, in ſome of his diſcourſes, diſplayed a conſummate knowledge of human nature and the world, will be readily admitted. Nor can it be enough regretted, that one who was not deſtitute of ability to ſhine in the *pathetic*, (as appears from

ſome chapters in the *Sentimental Traveller*) ſhould not have ſingled out a few ſubjects in divinity that were admirably adapted to ſuch ability, and handled them as they deſerve and ought to be handled.

BRUYERE (who knew how to touch the foibles of mankind with ſuch delicacy and urbanity) gives us a lively picture of the mode of preaching in his time. "Preaching, ſays he, is "now-a-days become a meer ſhew: that "gravity, which, under the Goſpel, is "ſo much the life of preaching, is ab-"ſolutely laid aſide; and an advan-"tageous mien, a pretty tone of the "voice, exactneſs of geſture, choice of "expreſſion, and long repetitions, are "thought to ſupply its place very well. "To attend ſeriouſly on the diſpenſa-"tion of the holy word, is no longer "cuſtomary.

" cuſtomary. Going to church is an " amuſement among a thouſand others, " and preaching a diverſion. The " preachers play the prize, and the " hearers bett upon their heads. Every " hearer thinks himſelf capable to judge " of the *ſermon*, and accordingly cen- " ſures or applauds it; but is no more " converted by the ſermon which he ad- " mires, than that which he condemns. " The *Orator* pleaſes ſome and of- " fends others, but agrees with all in " this: that as he does not endeavour " to render them better, ſo they ne- " ver trouble their heads about becom- " ing ſo."

This faculty of the *imagination*, which enables the preacher to give elegance to ſimplicity, and dignity to the moſt common and obvious truths, belonged in an eminent degree to our Saviour and

his Apoſtles. If you would ſee the *kingdom* of *heaven*, or the Goſpel *ſtate* deſcribed by eaſy and pertinent *ſimilitudes*, if you would find the precepts of morality conveyed in the moſt agreeable vehicles, borrowed from the ſtore-houſe of *fancy*, you need only peruſe the *Parables* of *Chriſt*.

Is it poſſible for the œconomy of the *Goſpel ſtate*, the nature, efficacy, and propagation of its doctrine, to be ſet before us in a more happy or taking method than our Saviour had recourſe to? The narrow limits of the *Jewiſh church* (which even in its moſt flouriſhing condition, was ſhut up within the bounds of *Canaan*, and the countries adjacent) are aptly repreſented by the Pſalmiſt, under the emblem of a *tranſplanted vine*, Pſ. lxxx. 8, 9, &c. The marvellous propagation or increaſe

of

of the *Chriſtian Inſtitution* (which was to be diffuſed throughout the world, and to endure together with it) is beautifully compared by Chriſt to the prodigious fecundity of *ſeeds*. *The kingdom of heaven*, ſays he, *is like to a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which a man took and ſowed in his field. Which indeed is the leaſt of all ſeeds: but when it is grown, it is the greateſt among herbs, and becometh a tree: ſo that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.* Matt. xiii. 31, 32. Chriſt no ſooner erected his ſtandard, than men of all countries and all religions under heaven liſted themſelves under it. The *Goſpel* is frequently, in the New Teſtament, compared to *light*; nor does it in any ſingle article more reſemble light than in this, that as ſoon as it made its appearance it darted its bright rays, and

diffuſed its quickening influence, from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*, with incredible ſwiftneſs.

Another parable ſpake he unto them, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three meaſures of meal, till the whole was leavened. ver. 33. For, as ſuch a little leaven ſpreads its ferment in a few days through the whole meal, ſo the religion of Jeſus ſhall, by the power and evidence of truth itſelf, ſpread itſelf in time throughout the world.

When our Saviour was about to explain and illuſtrate his free offer of the ineſtimable privileges of the Goſpel to the Jews, and afterwards upon their rejection of them to the Gentiles, could he poſſibly do it in a more forcible, or leſs offenſive manner, than he hath in he parable of the marriage of the king's ſon.

ſon. *The kingdom of heaven* (or that new alliance which God contracted with men in the perſon of Chriſt) *is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his ſon, and ſent forth his ſervants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.* Matt. xxii. 2, 3. Such was the behaviour of the Jews towards the prophets, and eſpecially *John* the *Baptiſt*, who invited them to render themſelves worthy of the gracious terms of the Goſpel-covenant, but juſt to no manner of purpoſe. *Again, he ſent forth other ſervants, ſaying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandiſe: And the remnant took his ſervants, and entreated them ſpitefully, and ſlew them.*

them. ver. 4, 5, 6. Such was their treatment of the *holy Apoſtles*, who were ſent to repeat the doctrine of ſalvation, and urge them to accept the offers of divine mercy. *But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he ſent forth his armies, and deſtroyed thoſe murderers, and hurnt up their city.* ver. 7. A cataſtrophe which took place within forty years after the death of Chriſt, the *armies* of the *Romans* being no other than ſo many inſtruments in the hands of God for the execution of his vengeance. See JOSEPHUS, l. 6. *Then ſaith he to his ſervants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the high-ways, and as many as ye ſhall find, bid to the marriage. So thoſe ſervants went, &c.* ver. 8, 9, 10. The Jews, approving themſelves *unworthy*, God commanded the Goſpel to be preached

not only to the penitent proſelytes of the Gentiles in *Judea*, but ſent his *Apoſtles* alſo into the darkeſt and moſt ignorant parts of the world. *Paul and Barnabas ſaid, It was neceſſary that the word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you: but ſeeing ye put it from you, and judge yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For ſo hath the Lord commanded us, ſaying, I have ſet thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou ſhouldſt be for ſalvation unto the ends of the earth.* Acts xiii. 46, 47. The apoſtles for a long time confined their preaching to the Jews and their proſelytes, till about fourteen years after the death of Chriſt, St. Paul, by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt, began to apply himſelf to the Gentiles, and to call them into the *faith*, as heirs of ſalvation, in common with the *Jews*. *And when the king came in to ſee the gueſts,*

he

he ſaw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment: And he ſaith unto him, Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? ver. 11, 12. Our Lord, willing to guard againſt any vain confidence which the Gentiles might entertain upon being admitted to the *ſacred banquet*, lets them ſee that it was likewiſe in their power to forfeit the divine favour by any *unworthineſs* on their part. For under that *ſingle individual* who had not on a *wedding-garment*, is comprehended as many as are *chriſtians* only in *name*, or by virtue of their being baptized in the name of *Chriſt*.

At another time, when Jeſus was diſpoſed to let the *Jews* into a proper ſenſe of their heinous gilt in murthering the *Lord* of life, he did it in the moſt effectual manner, under that beautiful and inſtructive parable of the vineyard. *A certain man,*

man, ſays he, *planted a vineyard, and let it forth to huſbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. And at the ſeaſon he ſent a ſervant to the huſbandmen, that they ſhould give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the huſbandmen beat him, and ſent him away empty.* Luke xx. 9, 10. Juſt ſo the *Jews*, to whom God had vouchſafed a particular revelation of his will, acted towards his ſervants the prophets, whom he ſent to remind them of their duty. *And again he ſent another ſervant; and they beat him alſo, and entreated him ſhamefully, and ſent him away empty. And again he ſent the third; and they wounded him alſo, and caſt him out.* ver. 11, 12. Thus did that ſtiff-necked race obſtinately reject and deſpiſe the ſucceeding prophets, whom God ſent to them upon the ſame errand. *Then ſaid the Lord of the vineyard, What ſhall I do? I will ſend my beloved ſon: it may be*

be they will reverence him when they ſee him. ver. 13. This was the final reſource of God to a people who were not to be overcome by any arguments, any mode of teaching whatever. For *mark* the reception which they gave to that beloved Son himſelf, and his doctrine. *When the huſbandmen ſaw him, they reaſoned among themſelves, ſaying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they caſt him out of the vineyard, and killed him.* * ver. 14, 15. In fine, he that knew how unwelcome

* The office of *Jeſus* was to put an end to the legiſlation and inſtitutes of Moſes; but the preordained blindneſs of *Judah* was to be brought on by the ſteady belief of its perpetual obligation: it follows then, that the conduct of Jeſus muſt be confined to the divine decree; and, conſequently, all his diſcourſes which might any ways affect it, ſhould be in a dark and figurative manner. Hence the reaſon of his numerous *parables*, as he himſelf informs

welcome advice and the truth for the moſt part are, nay, that thoſe who ſtand in the moſt preſſing need of either, are apt to be of all others the moſt ſuſpicious of, and averſe to them, was himſelf a perfect maſter in the arts of giving ſuch advice, and ſpeaking ſuch truth, in the moſt judicious and ſkilful manner. See *Matt.* xx. *Luke* viii.

How wonderfully ſignificant and juſt are thoſe plain and familiar *alluſions* which occur in our Saviour's Sermon upon the *Mount*, where the heart of man is laid open to our naked view, and all our ſecret impulſes to ill and falſe

informs his diſciples, who came and ſaid to him, *Why ſpeakeſt thou to them in parables? He ſaid to them, becauſe it is given unto you to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven*, (i. e. of the univerſal revelation) *but to them it is not given.*

CHARLES on the Diſperſion.

appearances

appearances of good are detected. Of this ſort are theſe that follow: *Ye are the ſalt of the earth: Ye are the light of the world. A city that is ſet on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a buſhel.* And again, *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light. Why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but conſidereſt not the beam that is in thine own eye.* Matt. v. 13, &c. How happily is Chriſt himſelf (that is to ſay, the church which is planted upon, and profeſſes the doctrine of the Goſpel) repreſented under the emblem of a vine, and particular members of the church under that of the branches. *I am the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman, &c.* John xv. How beautifully hath he characteriſed certain falſe, proud teachers, who ſerve their own worldly ambitious ends

inſtead of ſeeking the ſalvation of their hearers in that way which God hath revealed by him, under the idea of *ſtrangers*, *robbers*, and *hirelings*, and himſelf under that of a *good ſhepherd*, John x. 11, 12. *I am the good ſhepherd: the good ſhepherd giveth his life for the ſheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the ſhepherd, whoſe own the ſheep are not, ſeeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the ſheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and ſcattereth the ſheep.* By theſe alluſions a truth in the underſtanding is, as it were, reflected by the *imagination*.

How natural and pertinent are the *ſymbols* which he makes uſe of, when he would let us ſee, in ſpite of our own deplorable folly and blindneſs, that our life is but a *ſpan* long, or that there is but a *point* between us and the *grave*. *Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, leſt darkneſs*

come upon you. John xii. 35. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.* Matt. xxv. 13. *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Now is the ax laid to, &c.* Luke iii. 8, 9.

St. *Paul* abounds in ſtrong and lively images, or alluſions, which render objects remote from ſenſe and matter, palpable and familiar to the mind. The imperfect nature of the *Moſaical* diſpenſation is illuſtrated by two happy compariſons, the one taken from a *ſchool*, wherein children are trained up for higher learning, the other, from a ſon and heir to a man's eſtate. *Wherefore*, ſays the great apoſtle, *the law was our ſchool-maſter to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a ſchool-maſter.* Gal. iii. 24, 25. And again,

again, *Now I ſay, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a ſervant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.* Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3. *Wherefore* (ſubjoins he, addreſſing himſelf to thoſe of the *Jewiſh* part, whoſe term of minority was elapſed) *thou art no more a ſervant, but a ſon; and if a ſon, then an heir of God through Chriſt.* ver. 7.

Where he cautions the Gentiles againſt inſulting the Jews for being rejected by God, he ſpeaks of the latter under the ſenſible idea of *natural branches*, and the former under that of Cions of another tree grafted upon their *ſtock*. *If*, ſays he, *the firſt fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy: and if the root be holy, ſo*

are the branches. And if ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou, Gentile, *being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in amongſt them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive tree; glory not againſt the branches: but if thou glorieſt, thou beareſt not the root, but the root thee.* Rom. xi. 16, 17, 18. Not the leaſt bleſſing is derived from you to the Jewiſh nation, but you have received from them the original promiſe of grace made to *Abraham*, which is the foundation of all your ſpiritual privileges. *If God ſpared not the natural branches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee.* ver. 21.

When he exhorts men to dedicate themſelves to the ſervice of God by an exact ſobriety, or prudent auſtereneſs, and mortification, he hath recourſe to the ſtrong image of a *ſacrifice*, or legal oblation,

oblation, which ought to be without ſpot or blemiſh. *I beſeech you*, (ſays the Apoſtle, who had, in the preceding chapters, demonſtrated that both Jews and Gentiles are now capable of pardon, upon the terms of faith and repentance) *therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God*, (or all the privileges given us freely, in the Goſpel, by the mercy of God) *that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice*, calling *moral duties* a reaſonable ſervice, in oppoſition to the *ritual* obſervances of the law. *Rom.* xii. 1. See *Epheſ.* iv. 15, 16. ii. 10, 19, 20.

His *metaphors* (which caſt a kind of glory round them, being always ſupported by a ground-work of maſculine and nervous ſtrength) are far more ſignificant and expreſſive than any that are to be met with in the *Greek* or *Roman* writers. How emphatically hath he

given the name of *dead* men to thoſe who are utterly loſt to all ſenſe of God and religion. *And you hath he quickned, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* Epheſ. ii. 1. With what equal force and vigour hath he diſtinguiſhed the heathen and chriſtian ſtate by the oppoſite qualities of *darkneſs* and *light*, *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now, &c.* Epheſ. v. 8. Speaking of his converts at *Theſſalonica*, which conſiſted of ſome Jews, but chiefly of Greeks, proſelyted to their religion (*Acts* vii.) he *metaphorically* calls them *his hope, his glory, his joy, his crown of rejoicing*, 1 Theſ. ii. 19. And in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians* (which is a letter of thanks for their reſpectful behaviour to himſelf, as well as of home-felt joy for their ſteady adherence to the chriſtian faith) he ſtiles the Jewiſh zealots, what they, by way of contempt, uſed to call the heathens, *dogs*,

dogs, and all true chriſtians the *circumciſion*, *Phil.* iii. 2, 3. And in a few ſucceeding verſes, in which he draws the character of thoſe Jewiſh zealots, he ſays, *that they are the enemies of the croſs of Chriſt: whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, and whoſe glory is in their ſhame.* ver 18, 19. See *Rom.* iii. 13. *Eph.* vi. 14, 15, 16. *Heb.* xii. 1, 2, &c.

Let me juſt make one obſervation upon theſe admirable epiſtles of St. *Paul*, that the exact coincidence between the many *alluſions* contained in them to particular facts, and the account of the *facts* themſelves, as ſet down in the hiſtory of the *Acts*, is no ordinary confirmation of the truth of either.

St. *Peter* abounds in *images* and *alluſions* ſuperlatively beautiful and ſig-

nificant. * Of this ſort are thoſe expreſſions of *living ſtones*, a *ſpiritual houſe*, a holy *prieſthood*, which, alluding to the Jewiſh temple and prieſthood, are intended to ſhew the excellency of the *Chriſtian* above the *Jewiſh* religion. *Coming to Chriſt as unto a living ſtone, diſallowed indeed of men, but choſen of God, and precious. Ye alſo as lively ſtones, are built up a ſpiritual houſe, an holy prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* 1 Peter ii. 4, 5. Again, ſpeaking of wretches who had renounced all principles of ſober reaſon and true religion, he compares them to *ſprings* quite dried up, or *clouds* full of noxious vapours. *Theſe are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempeſt, to*

* Rhetorical and poetical images have a different intent. The deſign of a poetical image is ſurpriſe; that of a rhetorical is perſpicuity. However, to move and ſtrike the imagination, is a deſign common to both. LONGINUS, S. 15.

whom

whom the miſt of darkneſs is reſerved for ever. 2 Peter ii. 17. How does the apoſtle ſtamp terror upon our imaginations by this awful deſcription of the *day* of the *Lord* which follows. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.* iii. 10. Let me juſt remark here, that the *ſtile* of the *ſecond* chapter being throughout *lofty* and *pompous*, and in this reſpect different from that of the *firſt* and *third*, as well as from the whole *firſt epiſtle*, is by no means a ſubſtantial reaſon for calling the *genuineneſs* of the *ſecond epiſtle* in queſtion. That it was written by St. Peter is ſufficiently clear from the expreſs mention it makes of a former *epiſtle* he had written to them, 2 *Peter* iii. 1. as well as from the

the viſible connection between the *two*, the *ſecond* being written to arm the *chriſtians* againſt the uneaſineſs they were under, upon the *delay* of that deliverance which the *firſt* had promiſed. Add to this, his taking notice of what he *heard* and *ſaw* at the transfiguration on the Mount, where none of the diſciples were with Chriſt, except *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, i. 16, 17, 18. The *ſecond chapter* itſelf, as to the matter of it, is manifeſtly taken from ſome *Jewiſh* book, which gave an account of the ſcoffers before the flood, who derided *Noah*'s prediction of it, and applied by St. *Peter* to the falſe teachers who were crept in among the chriſtians, and derided their *expectation* of deliverance from the perſecutions they were under, grounded upon what our Saviour and his apoſtles had told them concerning the judgments

that

that were to come upon the *Jewiſh* perſecutors.

In regard to the things of another world, let me remark in general, that there is no other way of revealing them but by *analogy* with thoſe of the preſent world. Man is not capable of knowing them by direct and immediate intuition. *Now*, ſays the apoſtle, *we ſee through a glaſs darkly*, i. e. by analogy with the things of this world, *but then face to face*, or we ſhall have as immediate a view of heavenly objects, as we have now of thoſe things which only repreſent them to us. Thus the glory and intellectual light of heaven is revealed under the notion of that we have from the *ſun*. And when we are told that the *ſaints ſhall reign for ever*, the analogous object made uſe of by God for revealing their

glorious ſtate, is that of the ſplendor of a *kingdom.*

The Epiſtle of St. *James*, (who was called the *Lord's brother*, that word in the *Jewiſh* language being commonly appropriated to all near relations) directed to the *Jewiſh chriſtians* diſperſed in foreign countries, is full of beautiful ſimilies and ſtrong metaphors. Is it poſſible to repreſent a man that is *divided* in his *religious* principles, or has no fixed perſuaſion of, or reliance upon, the divine power and goodneſs, under a more juſt image than that of a *wave of the ſea, driven with the wind and toſſed.* James i. 6. Can the brief duration of *temporal* ſucceſs or proſperity be ſet before us in a more ſtriking view than under the image of the *ſun, which is no ſooner riſen with a burning heat, but it withereth the graſs, and the flower thereof falleth,*

falleth, and the grace of the faſhion of it periſheth. ver. 11. Can the egregious folly of a *chriſtian* that is *contented* with *liſtening* to the *word* of God only, but doeth it not, be placed in a more happy point of light than under the picture of *a man beholding his natural face in a glaſs: For he beholdeth himſelf, and goeth his way, and ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* ver. 23, 24. The utter inſignificancy of the loudeſt pretences to *faith* without *works*, was never more happily illuſtrated than by the apoſtle, where he ſays, *As the body without the ſpirit is dead, ſo faith without works is dead alſo,* ii. 26.

With what a train of forcible *imagery* hath he decyphered the miſchievous effects of a cenſorious and unbridled tongue. *Behold, we put bits in the horſes mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn*

turn about their whole body. Behold alſo the ſhips, which though they be ſo great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very ſmall helm, whitherſoever the governor liſteth. Even ſo the tongue is a little member, and boaſteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: ſo is the tongue amongſt our members, that it defileth the whole body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature; and it is ſet on fire of hell. For every kind of beaſts, and of birds, and of ſerpents, and things in the ſea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poiſon. Therewith bleſs we God, even the Father; and therewith curſe we men. My brethren, theſe things ought not ſo to be. Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree bear olive-

olive-berries? either a vine, figs? ſo can no fountain both yield ſalt water and freſh. iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. To mention but one inſtance more——When St. *James* would fain prevail upon his *brethren*, that were converted to a religion which ſubjected them to ſuch a variety of perſecutions, to bear up againſt them with chriſtian fortitude, he makes uſe of an alluſion of all others the moſt pertinent and judicious. *Behold, the huſbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye alſo patient; ſtabliſh your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* v. 7, 8. And the *deſtruction* of *Jeruſalem* did accordingly take place but a few years after this epiſtle was written, the date whereof is fixed by Dr. MILLS in, or juſt before, the year of Chriſt *ſixty*.

St.

St. *John*, in his *Revelations*, preſents us with images ſo ſtrongly conceived, that we ſeem to behold with our eyes the very ſcenes he is deſcribing. Speaking of the day of judgment with the ſame certainty and aſſurance as if it was already paſt, he ſays, *And I ſaw a great white throne, and him that ſat on it, from whoſe face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell*, i. e. the grave, *delivered up the dead which were in them: And whoſoever was not found written in the book of life, was*

caſt into the lake of fire. Rev. xx. 11, 12, 13, 15. And again, ſpeaking of the *ſouls* in *bliſs*, who died for the name of the *Lord Jeſus*, he ſays, *Theſe are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple: and he that ſitteth on the throne ſhall dwell among them. They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the ſun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the throne ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Rev. vii. 14, 15, &c. And again, foretelling the ſigns that ſhould precede that great and terrible day of the Lord, he breaks forth, *I beheld, and lo, there*

was a great earthquake, and the ſun became black as ſackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood: And the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely figs. And the heaven departed as a ſcroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and iſland were moved out of their places: And the kings of the earth ſaid to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Rev. vi. 12, 13, &c. See his deſcription of the Son of God, *Rev.* xix. ver. 11—17. See chapter xxi.——See chapter x.

Of how different a ſtamp are the alluſions, metaphors, and ſimilies, which are to be found in certain florid diſcourſes, from what occur in thoſe of our Saviour

and

and his apoſtles.* The author of a *Sermon* publiſhed in 1645, aiming at a few

* ECHARD, in his *Grounds* and *Reaſons* for the *contempt* of the *clergy*, ſays, "One thing that brings "great diſreſpect upon the clergy is their packing "their ſermons ſo full of *ſimilitudes*, which, all the "world know, carry with them but very ſmall force "of argument, unleſs there be an exact agreement "with that which is compared, of which there is "very ſeldom any ſufficient care taken. But they "are not ſo unſerviceable as they are uſually ridicu-"lous; for people of the weakeſt parts are moſt "commonly overborne with theſe fooleries; which, "together with the great difficulty of their being "prudently managed, muſt needs occaſion them, "for the moſt part, to be very trifling and childiſh. "But, ſay they, did not our Saviour uſe many "metaphors and parables: And is not this not only "warrant enough, but near upon a command for "us ſo to do?——As for our Saviour, when he "ſpoke a *parable*, he was pleaſed to go no farther "than the *fields*, the *ſea-ſhore*, a *garden*, a *vineyard*, "or the like: but as for our metaphorical and ſimi-"litude-men of the pulpit, thoſe things to them

a few *rhetorical flowers*, preſents us with the following *bunch of thiſtles*. "God, ſays P. E. hath appointed "the love of our neighbour to be a "private index to ourſelves, and, as it "were, water-mark to our own hearts, "to diſcover by it how much the love "of God *ebbs* or *flows* within us.— "How has the Goſpel *ſpread* like *oil* "upon the face of the world; when "the *veſſels* of the ſanctuary have been "*broken*, the body of Chriſt has grown "ſtrong by bruiſes, and vigorous by

"are too ſtill and languid, they do not rattle and "rumble, theſe lie too near home, and within the "vulgar ken: There is little on this ſide the moon "that will content them: up preſently to the *pri-* "*mum mobile* and the trepidation of the firmament: "dive into the bowels and hid treaſures of the "earth; diſpatch forthwith for Peru and Jamaica; "a town-bred or a country-bred ſimilitude is worth "nothing."

"continual

" continual preſſures; the fire of per-
" ſecution, inſtead of conſuming the
" temple, has made it more viſible."

Of a like ſort or character are theſe flowers which M. P. ſcatters with ſuch wild profuſion over his ſeveral diſcourſes. " Paradiſe, ſays he, is now turned into " a wilderneſs; the *leaves* of the tree " of life are *fallen*, and the earth is now " covered with the *ruins* of our apoſtacy. " Does not the king of *terrors* triumph " here? Are not *bones* and *ſculls*, *blood* " and *carcaſes*, the trophies of his con-" queſt, ſo that the earth is now a ge-" neral *ſepulchre*? And would we be " fond of rottenneſs and corruption? " Is not the world ſtrewed with the " ſnares of hell, as the *net* of *Satan* " is as *broad* as the earth, and ſhall " we take pleaſure in theſe?——When " the *waters* of affliction ſwell, the

" ſaints are in the *ark*, but when the " land is dry, then the *dove* wanders " and defiles itſelf. The deſign of " Satan in our afflictions may be to " render us contemptible in the eyes " of the angels, that it may be looked " upon by them as a diſhonour to " charge themſelves with a church in " *rags* and *fetters*."

To quote one inſtance more—" Chriſt " (ſays one treating upon the ſubject of " faith) is a treaſury of all wares and " commodities. Good people, what " do you lack? What do you buy? " Will you buy my balm of Gilead? " Any eye-ſalve, any mirrh, aloes and " caſſia? Shall I fit you with a robe " of righteouſneſs? See here, what is " it you want? Shall I ſhew you a hel- " met of ſalvation?" It is really enough

to make the people giddy to hear men talk nonſenſe ſo devoutly.

The ſmooth and ſtudied declaimer of *to-day* (whoſe characteriſtic is a fond deſire of ſparkling) ſhall, under all the verdure of expreſſion, betray an utter barrenneſs of thought. His diſtinguiſhing marks are a trick of metaphor, vain and elaborate turns of fancy, pretty or finical thoughts ſprucely dreſſed. Such a one ſhall be infinitely more concerned for the cadence of a period, than for the ſalvation of a *ſoul*. Having neither the ſubtlety and exactneſs of an accurate *Logician*, nor the depth and ſolidity of an able *Divine*, he may be ſaid, in the language of the Poet, only *to write about it and about it*. The few ideas he is really maſter of, are ſet in the broadeſt glare, with an apparent deſign of angling for praiſe, or dazzling the ſilly multitude.

The unſubſtantial harmony of *declamation* is brought to ſome degree of perfection in the abundantly foppiſh ſermons of D--r D---, Mr. S----, Mr. W---, &c. It would be an invidious taſk to quote a few ſpecimens of their bold, voluble, lecture-like, however muſical, inſignificancy. The amiable truths of religion ſhall be cooked up by orators of this claſs, like French ragouſts, with ſo many different ingredients that no hearer living knows what to make of them. PLINY *the Younger*'s complaint of ſome orators of his age, may be not improperly applied at this day. Writing to a friend of his, he ſays, that he is aſhamed to tell him what he had heard ſome orators recite, or to entertain him with the effeminate ſqueakings, which their *declamation* was filled with. He charges that of others with degenerating into a *downright bawling*. Ep. xiv. l. 12. This

pleaſing *epiſtolary writer* adds, that DOMITIUS AFER, a celebrated orator in the Roman hiſtory, who began to plead about thirty years after the death of CICERO, called the new manner of *declaiming* the downfall of *eloquence*.

To form a judgment of a verboſe and puerile declamation, or pronounce aright upon its real and intrinſic worth, a man need only follow the excellent advice of Pere GISBERT. "Make an exact ana-
"lyſis of your diſcourſe, and examine
"all its parts; obſerve their connexion
"or dependence on one another; ſepa-
"rate things from the words where-
"with they are wrapped up, and con-
"ſider them ſo ſtripped of all their or-
"naments. This ſort of analyſis is
"a kind of crucible, wherein nothing
"but gold can ſtand the teſt; every
"thing impure evaporates, or is re-
"duced

" duced to droſs. How few diſcourſes
" are able to endure the fire of this
" *exact* and vigorous analyſis! How
" many of them vaniſh into ſmoak!
" How many leave nothing behind them
" but a heap of taſteleſs and inſipid
" aſhes!"

The *Ancients*, who were ſo wonderfully attentive to the ſmoothneſs and harmony of their numbers, have told us what *feet* are beſt ſuited to the *beginning*, the *middle*, or *concluſion* of a ſentence. DIONYSIUS of *Halycarnaſſus*, in his admirable treatiſe Περι Συνθεσει Ονομαϛων, has unfolded all the ſecret arts that render *compoſition* harmonious. After treating of the three different ſpecies of compoſition, which he divides into the *nervous* and *auſtere*, the *ſmooth* and *florid*, and the *middle*, which partakes of the nature of both, he hath ſubdivided *periods* into

into their different members, thoſe members into their words, and thoſe *words* into *ſyllables*. Nay, he has even anatomized the very ſyllables into letters, making obſervations on the different natures and ſounds of the vowels, half-vowels, and mutes.

The moſt *elegant* of Roman writers, QUINTILIAN, in his ninth book upon *Compoſition*, has laid down ſome valuable precepts relative not only to the placing of the words and members of a ſentence, but to the connexion as well as quantity of letters and ſyllables.

To collect but a few out of this admirable work, which *Pogge* the Florantine found compleat in the tower of a monaſtery. "Videndum, ne ſyl-"labæ verbi prioris ultimæ, ſint pri-"mæ ſequentis. Etiam monoſyllaba, "ſi plura ſunt male continuabuntur "quia

" quia neceſſe eſt compoſitio multis
" clauſulis conciſa ſubſultet. Ideoque
" etiam brevium verborum ac nominum
" vitanda continuatio; & ex diverſo quo-
" que longorum: Afferunt enim quan-
" dam dicendi tarditatem. Illa quoque
" vitia ſunt ejuſdem loci, ſi cadentia
" ſimiliter, & ſimiliter deſinentia, &
" eodem modo declinata, multis jun-
" gantur. Quo pedes ſunt temporibus
" pleniores longiſq; ſyllabis magis ſta-
" biles, hoc graviorem facium oratio-
" nem; breves celerem ac mobilem.—
" Neque tam ſint intuendi pedes, quam
" univerſa comprehenſio. Optime ju-
" dicam aures, quæ & plena ſentium
" & parum expleta deſideram & fragoſis
" offenduntur, & lenibus mulcentur &
" contoriis excitantur, & ſtabilia pro-
" bant clauda deprehendunt, redundantia
" & nimia faſtidiunt. Ideoque docti rati-
" onem componendi intelligum, indocti
" voluptatem. Habet periodus membra

" minimum

" minimum duo. Medius numerus,
" videtur quatuor: ſed recipit frequen-
" ter & plura. Membrum longius jun-
" to, tardum: brevius, inſtabile eſt."
l. ix. c. 4.

CICERO, (to whom no writer is ſuperior, if equal, in arranging the members of a period), hath in his third Book *de Oratore*, taught us how to pleaſe and perſuade by the ornamental parts of oratory. The efficacy and importance of well-choſen words, harmonious periods, and the like, is there treated of at large.

Notwithſtanding all that ſuch diſtinguiſhed *names* have advanced upon this article, I cannot but agree with the ſenſible FORDICE, where he ſays, " The
" man who has ranged every thought,
" meaſured every ſentence, tranſition,
" and

" and circumſtance of his diſcourſe,
" and ſettled the whole method of his
" delivery in his cloſet, may be a cor-
" rect and elegant ſpeaker, but can ne-
" ver be a popular and powerful orator:
" he will fall into a cold and phlegmatic
" manner of ſpeaking, or if he throws
" himſelf into a forced heat, it will
" appear artificial, or elſe evaporate in
" a tedious inſipid ſameneſs of voice
" and action, either of which are the
" dead weights of genuine eloquence.
" Whereas, if the ſpeaker be tho-
" roughly enlightened and warmed with
" his ſubject, and feels himſelf the
" paſſions he means to inſpire, nature
" will ſuggeſt the moſt becoming orna-
" ments, and ſignificant phraſes, will
" vary the tones of the voice accord-
" ing to the riſes and falls and dif-
" ferent turns of the paſſion. Such a
" ſpeaker, with all his repetitions,

" breaks,

" breaks, inaccuracies, and chaſms in " diſcourſe, will force his way into the " bowels and ſoul of the hearer; will " kindle and ſet on fire his whole " frame, while your ſmooth declaimer " will ſend him away as cold and un- " moved as he found him."

Of a different ſort from *declaimers* are a certain order of preachers, whoſe over-heated imaginations are let looſe to purſue their own wild frantic conceits. A *ſect* this, which miſtaken zeal, ſtudied hypocriſy, an over-weening ſelf-conceit, and perhaps a ſpirit of faction, have nurſed up in the boſom of our own church.

Their diſcourſes, like the world in its chaos, are, for the moſt part, utterly void of all light, diſtinction and order. The new language, and new tenets, of

ſo

ſo vain, ſubtle and intereſted a race, would be perfectly unintelligible to the apoſtles, if they ſhould come back again into the world. Their violent geſture and vociferation naturally ſhake the hearts of the ignorant, and fill them with a kind of religious horror. A little of their holy *legerdemain* ſhall eaſily paſs upon the weakneſs and credulity of ſuch hearers for right, pure, orthodox faith and doctrine. In fine, inſtead of conducting the imagination and paſſions of an audience to the ſame point with reaſon (which is eſſential to the nobleſt ſpecies of eloquence), they lay out all their rhetorick in working upon their flexible imaginations to ſuch a degree, as really to put them beſide their *reaſon*.

" Nothing, ſays the incomparable Mr. " ADDISON, is more frequent than to " ſee women weep and tremble at the " fight of a moving preacher, though " he

" he is placed quite out of their hear-
" ing, as in England we very frequently
" ſee people lulled aſleep with ſolid
" and elaborate diſcourſes of piety,
" who would be warmed and tranſ-
" ported out of themſelves by the bel-
" lowings and diſtortions of enthuſi-
" aſm." The truth is, there is latent in the minds of the vulgar, both ſmall and great, a ſpark of enthuſiaſm, which, if blown by the breath of a ———, ſhall be preſently raiſed to a flame. And orators of a certain ſtamp or complexion will ever find a ſet of people, whoſe tone of underſtanding is exactly pitched to the extravagance and abſurdity of their tenets.

Pompous appearances and overbearing pretenſions have I know not what charms that quickly ſubdue and lead captive your little ſhallow minds. *We are not*

as other men are, is the characteriſtical diſtinction of ſuch *leaders*, whoſe blindneſs and arrogance united will hardly allow any degree of godlineſs or wiſdom, except in ſuch as are content to be *led* by them.

It would be an *endleſs* taſk to produce inſtances of their *ſeraphic emptineſs*, which lay expoſed for the gratis edification of itinerant readers at many a *ſtall* or corner.

——— *fluttering in a row,*
Befringe the rails of Bedlam and Soho.

A pleaſant writer having a congregation of theſe ſimple ones in view, ſays, " If " you teach them to believe *Chriſt*'s " doctrines, to obey his laws and con- " form to his example, theſe things " ſhall be counted dull and unedifying " that no ways affect and move; but

" if

" if you tell them that they muſt " *roll upon Chriſt*, that they muſt *get* " *into Chriſt*, get a ſaving intereſt in the " *Lord Chriſt*, O, this is ſavoury, this " is precious, this is ſpiritual teaching " indeed." Are the Goſpel-leſſons of *chaſtity*, *ſobriety*, and *juſtice* neceſſary to be practiſed, or are they not? If they are, why muſt the preachers in queſtion baniſh them from their pulpits, or at leaſt ſpeak of them in diminiſhing terms? Why muſt the much abuſed or wretchedly miſunderſtood doctrines of *free-will* and *grace*, *predeſtination* and *election*, be dwelt upon from one ſabbath to another, to the almoſt utter excluſion of thoſe moral *virtues?* One great end of Chriſt's coming was to correct the falſe gloſſes and interpretations of the *moral* law, and conſequently one end of his inſtituting a miniſtry muſt be to prevent the return of theſe abuſes, by keep-

ing up in the minds of the people a due ſenſe of their obligations to the performance of ſuch moral duties. Did men who lay an undue ſtreſs on the *merits and interceſſion of Chriſt*, as if they alone were neceſſary to ſalvation, ever hear of his reply to the youth, who aſked him what he ſhould do that he might *inherit eternal life? If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Matt. xix. 17.

It will be readily admitted, that in the days of the *Apoſtles* the neceſſity of human learning and endowments was ſuperſeded by the extraordinary illuminations of the Holy Spirit. The moſt illiterate might be, and were at leaſt *faithful* enough to deliver what they had received from above. But ſurely in vain do the people now ſeek *inſtruction* from men who ſtand in preſſing need of it themſelves,

themſelves, and are conſequently altogether incapable of giving it to others. It is at firſt hearing perfectly abſurd to ſuppoſe an uneducated mechanic fit to be entruſted with the public expoſition of the ſcriptures. It is really the higheſt ſtrain of *arrogance for one of this claſs to erect himſelf up into a *Chriſtian Orator*, and lead the multitude after him. A true lover of the ſacred writings cannot but be diſguſted to ſee their living beauties ſo miſerably defaced, their inimitable frame ſo barbarouſly disjointed by a ſet of ignorant and aſſuming fanatics. Every admirer of the religion of Chriſt muſt be cruelly hurt to perceive

* Qui nihil poteſt dignum re, dignum nomine Oratoris, dignum auribus hominum efficere, is mihi etiamſi commovetur in dicendo; tamen impudens videtur. Non enim pudendo, ſed non faciendo id quod non decet, impudentiæ nomen effugere debemus. CIC. de Orat.

its natural features ſo ſhamefully diſtorted, ſo wholly unlike themſelves. One that hath a becoming ſenſe of the dignity of the ſacred function muſt be filled with indignation to obſerve it diſgraced and put out of countenance at ſo unſanctified a rate.

The Jewiſh prieſts did not ſtand in need of ſuch extenſive erudition as the Chriſtian, becauſe their ſcriptures were originally written in their mother tongue, and they were daily converſant in thoſe cuſtoms which are ſo frequently alluded to in them. Add to this, that they had few or no unbelievers to contend with or oppoſe, ſince every blaſphemy againſt *God* or his law was deemed a crime againſt the ſtate, and that deſerving of exemplary puniſhment. The *dreſſer* of the *Lord's vineyard* hath buſineſs enough at preſent to ſeparate the *tares* of falſe teachers,

teachers, which ſhall with no ordinary degree of ſubtilty be mixed with the *wheat*, or pure doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles. The particular obſcurity of the *Hebrew*, which is an original and eſſential language, diſtinguiſhed by its cloſe and beautiful brevity, (particles disjunctive and adverſative, ſignificant marks of connexion and tranſition from one ſubject to another, being often omitted) the different rites and manners of the *Eaſt*, together with the defects of ſome parts of hiſtory to which there is frequent alluſion, will ſuffice to employ the reſearches of men of the greateſt leiſure and moſt improved talents. *To ſearch the ſcriptures* (which may be looked upon as a rich *mine*, that the greateſt parts and induſtry may dig in with freſh delight and improvement, to the utmoſt period of the moſt extended life) is not the caſual work of an

hour or day, but calls for an uncommon ſhare of application and perſeverance. The faithful and able diſcharge of the miniſtry requires a man to be not only *eloquent* and *mighty* in the *ſcriptures*, but to be maſter of all thoſe arts which may contribute to render his eloquence in every caſe ſucceſsful.* What ſhall we

* Amongſt *other grounds* of the *contempt* of the *Clergy*, the excellent ECHARD hath aſſigned *ignorance* as a principal one. "So ſtrangely poſſeſſed, ſays he, "are people in general with the eaſineſs and ſmall "preparations that are requiſite to the undertaking "of the miniſtry, that, whereas in other profeſſions "they plainly ſee what conſiderable time is ſpent, "before they have any hopes of arriving to ſkill "enough to practiſe, with any confidence, what "they have deſigned; yet to preach to ordinary "people, and govern a country pariſh, is uſually "judged ſuch an eaſy performance, that any body "counts himſelf fit for the employment. We find "very few ſo unreaſonably confident of their parts, "as to profeſs either law or phyſick, without a con-

"ſiderable

we then ſay or think of certain perſons going about to *preach the Goſpel* which they cannot ſo much as *read* in the language that it was written? Is it for ſuch men to ſet up for inſtructing the ignorant, reſolving the doubtful, baffling the erroneous, reclaiming the wicked? Is it for ſuch men to explain the word

" ſiderable continuance in ſome of the inns of *court*,
" or an induſtrious ſearch in herbs, anatomy, chy-
" miſtry, and the like. But, as for the knack of
" preaching, as they call it, that is ſuch a very
" eaſy attainment, that he is counted dull to purpoſe
" that is not able, at a very ſmall warning, to faſten
" upon any text of ſcripture, and to tear and tum-
" ble it till the glaſs be out. Many, I know very
" well, are forced to diſcontinue, having neither
" *ſtock* of their own, nor friends to maintain them
" in the *Univerſity*. But a man had much better
" commit himſelf to an approved of cobler or tinker,
" wherein he may be duly reſpected according to
" his office and condition of life, than to be only a
" diſeſteemed pettifogger, or empyrick in divinity."

of

of God, not as fancy and imagination flaſh a momentary light upon it, but by the juſt rules of *grammar*, *criticiſm*, *logic*, and the *analogy* of *faith*? Is it for ſuch men to trace the articles of doctrine drawn from the ſcriptures, through the primitive uncorrupted church, and confirm them by the evidence of the *fathers*? Is it for ſuch men to place in the moſt ſtriking light both the evidences and the excellency of the chriſtian inſtitution, and of the whole work of our *redemption* by Jeſus Chriſt, as they are fully and clearly laid down in the writings of the New Teſtament? Is it for ſuch men to be able to aſſemble together and compare all the parts of the Old and New Teſtament, juſt as you would behold with one glance of the eye, the beautiful diſpoſition and ſymmetry of a finiſhed ſtructure or palace? Is it for ſuch men thoroughly to diſcuſs the great

proof or evidence for the truth of chriſtianity ariſing from particular types and prophecies, which requires an accurate knowledge concerning the ancient Jewiſh cuſtoms, the authority of their writings, and the exact calculations of time? Look into their *crude enlargements* of *zeal* without *knowledge*, and you will find them, as you might reaſonably look to find them, made up of *falſe* divinity, *falſe* Engliſh, *falſe* grammar, *falſe* every thing.* PHOEDRUS' *Fable* of

* The above quoted ſagacious author thus accounts for what he calls the high-toſſing and ſwaggering preaching. "Thoſe that are inclinable to "make theſe uſeleſs ſpeeches to the people, do it for "the moſt part upon one or other of theſe conſidera-"tions: either out of ſimple phantaſtic glory and a "great ſtudiouſneſs of being wondered at; as if "getting into the pulpit was a kind of ſtaging, "where nothing was to be conſidered but how much "the ſermon takes, and how much ſtared at: or elſe

of the *Cobler* turned *Doctor*, is wonderfully applicable to theſe men:

The quack, thro' dread of death confeſs'd
That he was of no ſkill poſſeſs'd;
But all this great and glorious job
Was made of nonſenſe and the MOB.
Then did the king his peers convoke,
And thus unto the aſſembly ſpoke:
" *My Lords and Gentlemen, I rate*
" *Your folly as inordinate*

" elſe they do this to gain a reſpect and reverence " from their people, who, ſay they, are to be puz- " zled now and then, and carried into the clouds. " For if the miniſter's words be ſuch as the con- " ſtable uſes, his matter plain and practical, he may " paſs for an honeſt well-meaning man, but by no " means for any ſcholar: whereas, if he ſprings " forth now and then in high raptures towards the " uppermoſt heavens, daſhing here and there an all- " confounding word: if he ſoars aloft in unintel- " ligible huffs, preaches points deep and myſtical, " and delivers them as dark and phantaſtical, he " ſhall be accounted a moſt able and learned in- " ſtructor."

" *Who*

" *Who truſt your ſouls into his hand,*
" *Where no one had his heels japanned.*"
SMART.

The neceſſity of a regular miſſion, without which no one can miniſter publicly in holy things, is evident from the firſt inſtitution of a chriſtian church, as well as from the conſtant practice of it in all ages. St. *Paul* hath given two ſpecial reaſons for inſtituting a Goſpel miniſtry, namely, the preſervation of the *truth*, as well as of unity in the *church*. *Jeſus* (ſays the great Apoſtle) *gave ſome, apoſtles: and ſome, prophets: and ſome, evangeliſts: and ſome, paſtors and teachers; for the perfecting of the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*; all contributing, in their ſeveral places, to the better edification of the whole church, *till we all come in the unity of the faith,*

&c. Eph. iv. 11, &c. Agreeably to which, in his epiſtle to the Corinthians, he ſays, *There are differences of adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord,* all officers acting under one and the ſame Jeſus Chriſt. *Are all Apoſtles? are all prophets? are all teachers, &c.* 1 Cor. xii. 5, 29. As our bleſſed Lord comprehended in himſelf all the holy orders, and was called by the diſtinct names of *biſhop, prieſt,* and *deacon,* ſo he committed the joint offices to his twelve apoſtles, who miniſtred in them ſeverally till they firſt diſcharged themſelves of the *diaconal office,* and appointed over that buſineſs a ſeparate order of men, *Acts* vi. 3. And afterwards, to aſſiſt them in prayer and the miniſtry of the word, they ordained *elders,* or preſbyters, who, as an inferior order, were diſtinguiſhed from the apoſtles in the firſt *chriſtian church,* and the firſt *chriſtian council.* c. xv. 2, 6.

How

How clearly do the epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, which are the great charter of the chriſtian church, demonſtrate the form of *church government* to be founded in an imparity of biſhops, deacons, and preſbyters. Accordingly, IRENÆUS expreſſes himſelf with the ſtrongeſt aſſurance that POLYCARP was conſtituted biſhop of Smyrna by the apoſtles, and that the apoſtles gave the adminiſtration of epiſcopacy to LINUS at Rome. *Adverſ. Hæres*, l. iii. b. 3. The chief duty of thoſe whom the Holy Ghoſt made επισκοπους biſhops in Aſia was to watch againſt grievous wolves and factious teachers, who would go about to pervert and ſeduce men from the *truth*. And in what age hath the ſleight or cunning craftineſs of men who lie in wait to deceive, been more viſibly diſplayed than in our own? With what ſucceſs have their talents been exerted towards

towards corrupting the *faith* of Chriſt, and *breaking* the *unity* of his *church militant* upon earth! How many *thieves* and *robbers* (for ſuch are the names which Chriſt beſtows upon all that enter not into the *ſheepfold* by the *door*, or that way which the owner of the ſheep appointed) are diſperſed through all parts of the kingdom!

——— *As when a prowling wolf,*
Whom hunger drives to ſeek new haunt for prey,
Watching where ſhepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cotes, amid the field ſecure,
Leaps o'er the fence with eaſe into the fold:
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the caſh
Of ſome rich burgher, whoſe ſubſtantial doors
Croſs-barr'd and bolted faſt, fear no aſſault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;
So climbs the firſt grand thief into God's fold,
So ſince into his church lewd hirelings climb.

MILTON, b. iv. l. 186.

Into

Into how many ſects and factions (diſtinguiſhed by ſome peculiar tenets or modes of worſhip) hath this church been for many ages ſplit and divided. Ignorant and conceited quacks have converted it into a very *tower* of *Babel*, in which each ſpeaks a different language, or proclaims a *different Goſpel*. And which way can we poſſibly account for ſo many different languages, ſo many different modes of faith, except this one, viz. that fondneſs or prejudice can carry it above reaſon and truth; and where affection once takes place, the judgment grows utterly blind and partial. We can, alas! eaſily be wrought upon to believe any thing that we are only *willing* to believe, and we can juſt as eaſily *refuſe* to believe any thing that we are not *willing* to believe.

What a maſs of heretical corruptions have ſprung out of a romantic or arbitrary interpretation of holy writ by preciſe *knaves*, or enthuſiaſtic *madmen*.

How tortur'd texts to ſpeak their ſenſe are made,
And all their vices to the ſcripture laid.

YOUNG.

That *Chriſt* exiſted with God the *Father*, not only before his appearance upon earth, but alſo before the *creation* of the world, is as clear and indiſputable as the plaineſt terms in the Goſpel can make it. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The ſame was in the beginning with God.* John i. 1. Now mark and ſtand aghaſt at the ſenſe which the preſent *Socinian* factors have put upon this tortured text. *In the beginning was the Word*, ſignifies, according to their wild conceit, no more or leſs than that Chriſt

Chriſt *exiſted* when he firſt appeared upon earth; *the Word was with God* will admit of no other conſtruction but this, that *Chriſt* was *taken up* into heaven to *receive inſtructions* for his ſubſequent *errand*; *and the Word was God* is only as much as to ſay that he was *God's meſſenger*. Of the like ſtamp is their interpretation of *Thomas*'s direct confeſſion of his belief in Chriſt, when he exclaimed, *My Lord and my God*. The firſt compellation of *My Lord*, was doubtleſs, ſay they, directed to *Chriſt*, but the ſecond of *My God*, was no other than the effect of admiration, as when men cry out in a fit of ſurpriſe, *O God, what a wonderful thing is this!* Have ſuch interpreters of the word of God, ſuch *ſeekers* after the *truth*, been really at a loſs for it, or are they only bent upon ſetting up ſomething which they like better than his word or *truth* itſelf?

What a large infuſion of human policy and paſſions, what a ſcanty proportion of ſimplicity of heart and love of *truth*, are to be found in numbers even of its profeſſed *advocates!* How many are intoxicated with a preciſe ſet of tenets which they have adopted from their reſpective guides or teachers, without once fairly enquiring whether they are founded either in reaſon or revelation! There are, alas! frequently ſome unfelt prejudices, ſome ſecret wrong turns and affections, which prevent men otherwiſe candid and honeſt from diſcerning, or being willing to diſcern the truth in this or that particular inſtance. And how difficult a thing it is for us to go about laying the heats and prejudices, which, like ancient inhabitants, have poſſeſſion and preſcription to plead for their right, appears from hence, that the authority of the apoſtles themſelves,

confirmed

confirmed even by ſigns and wonders, was not equal to the taſk.

A certain man daily offered up his prayer unto God, "Lord, I underſtand "none of thoſe diſputes which are "continually made concerning thee; "I would ſerve thee according to thy "will; but every perſon I conſult "would have me do ſo according to "his will." Many ſpiritual guides are now full ready to point out their different paths of life, intimating at leaſt, if not denouncing damnation to as many as are backward to walk in them. The ordinary conſequence of which is, that ſome enliſt themſelves under particular heads or leaders to the utter deſtruction of Chriſtian love and unity; and others, giving up the purſuit of truth as altogether deſperate, ſurrender themſelves at once to univerſal ſcepticiſm.

The great point in all our religious enquiries is plainly this, that men ſhould on one ſide be ſo zealouſly attached to the *truth* as not at any rate to part with their *charity*; and on the other, ſo cultivate peace and charity, as not upon any conſideration to abandon the *truth*. And for this purpoſe they need only ſearch, digeſt, and apply the ſcriptures, depoſited with the church of Chriſt, as an infallible and ſtanding rule of *faith* and *manners*. The religion of Jeſus, which was the full accompliſhment of all the deſigns of God from the beginning to the end of *time*, the maſter-work of his profound wiſdom, his almighty power, his unbounded grace and mercy, is alone to be found in the Goſpel. And the rational chriſtian acquieſces in it as truth, not becauſe it is recommended by the country he lives in, or the parents he deſcends from, but becauſe it ſatisfies

his

his own underſtanding. For his own intellectual feelings alone at length are, and muſt be the ſtandard of truth to man. But alas! the many who *ſearch* the ſcriptures, do not ſo much *ſearch* for what they ought to do or believe, as for what they have been taught, or are inclined to do or believe. Natural and eternal as the alliance between truth and the human underſtanding may be, ſtill daily experience proves how liable it is to be ſuſpended, if not wholly broken, by ignorance, paſſion, bigotry, or prejudice. Happy, inexpreſſibly happy, are thoſe who have not in vain ſearched for the path of life, and finding it are ſteadily fixed to keep it for all their mortal ſtate to come. Wiſe, ſupremely wiſe, are thoſe who will not lend an ear to certain bigots or enthuſiaſts, that go about to make the path of life more broad or more narrow than God him-

ſelf hath been pleaſed to make it. All the bye-ways and indirect roads to heaven, which have been deviſed by the craftineſs of men, muſt unavoidably terminate in the endleſs confuſion and miſery of themſelves, and their deluded followers.

——— *Then might ye ſee*
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers toſt
And ſlutter'd into rags, then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, diſpenſes, pardons, bulls,
The ſport of winds; all theſe upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backſide of the world far off,
Into a limbo large and broad, ſince call'd
The paradiſe of fools.

MILTON, B. iii. l. 489.

Perhaps there never was, or will be, an eſtabliſhed church without ſome viſible marks of humanity upon it. But this we may and will contend for, that

no one extant is a more lively and faithful tranſcript of the primitive church of Chriſt, both in its doctrine and diſcipline, than that to which we ourſelves have the ſingular felicity to belong. A church that is in no wiſe to be dated from the reformation, as if it was built out of the old materials and rubbiſh of *popery*; for many hundred years before that huge over-grown body of childiſh and idle ſuperſtitions took place, it was planted, very near the days, if not by the hands of the apoſtles.

In regard to the operations of *fancy* or *imagination* compared with thoſe of the *underſtanding*, the former will appear to be leſs fixed and uniform than the latter. Truth makes an impreſſion nearly the ſame in every age and country, but the ideas of what is beautiful or elegant ſhall ſtrangely vary with the cli-

mate

mate or people. Hence it comes to paſs that the eaſtern mode of writing, which abounds with ſuch ardent and intenſe phraſes, ſuch bold and extravagant figures, ſhall be chiefly admired and reliſhed by thoſe who inhabit the Eaſt. Our northern imaginations are for the moſt part much too cold and languid to have any violent taſte for the emblematic and highly coloured expreſſion which glares ſo ſtrongly in the *prophecies* of *Ezekiel* and *Jeremiah*. Among the *Jewiſh* writers indeed every part and object of nature is animated and endowed with ſenſe, with paſſion, and with language. The chaſte and correct writings of the *Greeks* and *Romans* ſhew frigid and unanimated to a people of a more warm imagination, as for inſtance, the Arabians.

I cannot

I cannot ſhut up this ſecond part better than with the following judicious remarks that occur in *An Eſſay on Preaching*. "A man does not ſhew "his wit or learning by rolling in *metaphors*, abounding in high *expreſſions*, "and talking in the clouds, but he is "then learned when his learning has "cleared his underſtanding, and furniſhed him with full and diſtinct apprehenſions of things; when it enables him to make hard things plain, "and conceptions that were confuſed "diſtinct and orderly; and he ſhews "his learning by ſpeaking good ſtrong "plain ſenſe."

PART

PART III.

THE CHRISTIAN ORATOR, who proceeds no farther than to convince his hearers by the moſt powerful arguments, or to pleaſe them by cloathing thoſe arguments with all the natural graces and ornaments of which they are capable, hath left the moſt important and the moſt difficult part of his work undone. It is no ſuch rare talent to ſhew a man the *path* of *life*, and to make it as clear as poſſible that it is at once his duty and his intereſt to walk in it, but it calls for more than ordinary powers to work upon his will and affections

to

to that degree, as actually to determine him to walk in it. For ſuch, alas! is the native pride of the human heart, that it will not preſently yield to the juſt empire of reaſon; and ſuch is its acquired obſtinacy, that when it can hold out no longer, it will even impel a man to act in full and direct oppoſition to it.

How a preacher then is to become maſter of the *heart* and *affections*, ſo as to regulate every movement of them at pleaſure, is the great point in queſtion. To touch or play upon the paſſions (which may be conſidered as no other than the *ſtops* and *keys* of the ſoul) in a maſterly way, is confeſſedly an extraordinary gift, and falls to the ſhare of but very few. The only way by which an *Orator* can poſſeſs it in any degree, is to apply to his own feelings, and enquire upon what occaſions, and in what man-

ner his own heart is wont to be affected. Now every emotion of *joy* or *ſorrow*, *hope* or *fear*, that himſelf hath experienced, took its riſe from either the lively apprehenſion of ſome impending, or the actual feeling of ſome immediate good or evil. From whence it clearly follows, that one perſon ſhall excel another in the article of raiſing thoſe emotions, in proportion to his ſkill and ability of painting ſuch good or evil in more or leſs glowing colours. The *pathos* in a ſermon is the object not of *reaſon*, but *ſentiment*, and can be eſtimated only from its impreſſions on the minds of an audience. In fine, nothing can be more evident than that the direct way to the heart lies through the imagination.

Amongſt the few *Engliſh* preachers who have excelled in raiſing the paſſions, I ſhall not ſcruple to give the firſt place

to

to the juſtly celebrated Dr. *Sherlock*: A noble glow, a rich vein of eloquence, runs through his admirable diſcourſes. His oratory comes in to the aid of argument, and impreſſes thoſe truths which logic teaches in a warmer and more effectual manner. His plan or deſign is ever the moſt juſt, the moſt natural, the moſt complete imaginable. He lays down ſuch rules and principles as cannot fail to ſtrike with equal certainty and evidence upon all readers. Almoſt all his propoſitions are particular and determinate, and conſequently influencing. The ſentiments ariſing out of the ſubject, are in their own nature juſt, great, and emphatical. The diction, which is chaſte and ſimple in the *doctrinal* part, doth, with wonderful propriety, riſe and grow warm by ſome heightenings of imagination in the *practical*.

How

How forcibly does the eloquent preacher carry our imagination along with him through the various *ſcenery* which the periods that follow are made up of! "Go to your natural religion "(ſays he in a ſpirited taunt to the "unbeliever) lay before her Mahomet "and his diſciples arrayed in armour "and in blood, riding in triumph over "the ſpoils of thouſands and ten thou- "ſands, who fell by his victorious "ſword. Shew her the cities which "he ſet in flames, the countries which "he ravaged and deſtroyed, and the "miſerable diſtreſs of all the inhabi- "tants of the earth. When ſhe has "viewed him in this ſcene, carry her "into his retirements, ſhew her the "prophet's chamber, his concubines "and wives, and let her ſee his adul- "teries, and hear him alledge revela- "tion and his divine commiſſion to juſ-

" tify his luſts and his oppreſſions.
" When ſhe is tired with this proſpect,
" then ſhew her the bleſſed Jeſus,
" humble and meek, doing good to all
" the ſons of men, patiently inſtructing
" the ignorant and the perverſe. Let
" her ſee him in his moſt retired pri-
" vacies, let her follow him to the
" Mount and hear his devotions and
" ſupplications to God. Carry her to
" his table, to view his poor fare and
" hear his heavenly diſcourſe. Let her
" ſee him injured but not provoked,
" let her attend him to the tribunal, and
" conſider the patience with which he
" endured the ſcoffs and reproaches of
" his enemies. Lead her to his croſs,
" and let her view him in the agonies
" of death, and hear his laſt prayer for
" his perſecutors, *Father, forgive them,*
" *for they know not what they do.*
" When natural religion has viewed

" both,

" both, aſk which is the prophet of
" God.——But her anſwer we have al-
" ready had, when ſhe ſaw part of this
" ſcene through the eyes of the Centurion
" who attended at the croſs; by him ſhe
" ſaid, *Truly this was the Son of God.*"

The *pathos*, ſtrengthened by the nobleſt imagery, is calculated at once to engage the fancy, command the reaſon, and touch the paſſions of an audience. How flat and lifeleſs would a ſimple compariſon between the life of *Chriſt* and that of the arch *Impoſtor* ſhew, if ſet againſt ſo pictureſque and animated a narrative. If you was only to put *it* and *its* inſtead of *her*, you directly confound and deſtroy the *images*. *

The

* Such *imagery* only falls ſhort of that which is to be met with in the Hebrew prophets. To mention that ſublime *viſion* in which the impending de-

The following paſſage, in which he draws a compariſon between the ſtates of good and bad men in a life to come, carries with it a wonderful ſpirit and *pathos*. " Could I repreſent to you

ſolation of *Judæa* is painted by *Jeremiah* with ſuch colours, as if the whole univerſe was falling into its priſtine *chaos*. *I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void: and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderneſs, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the preſence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger.* Jer. iv. 23, &c. Admirable in this view is the *Pſalm* in which the majeſty of *God* coming to judge the earth is repreſented under *images* taken from his *deſcent upon mount Sinah. The Lord, even the moſt mighty God, hath ſpoken and called the world from the riſing up of the ſun, unto the going down thereof. Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence: there ſhall go before him a conſuming fire, and a mighty tempeſt ſhall be ſtirred up round about him,* &c. Pſalm l. See *Pſalm* xviii. 7, 12. *Rev.* xviii. 1. xx. 11.

" (ſays

" (ſays the perſuaſive orator) the diffe-
" rent ſtates of good and bad men:
" Could I give you the proſpect which
" the bleſſed martyr St. *Stephen* had,
" and ſhew you the bleſſed Jeſus at
" the right hand of God, ſurrounded
" with angels, and *the ſpirits of juſt*
" *men made perfect:* Could I open your
" ears to hear the never-ceaſing hymns
" of praiſe, which the bleſſed above *ſing*
" *to Him that was, and is, and is to*
" *come; to the Lamb that was ſlain,*
" *but liveth for ever:* Could I lead you
" through the unbounded regions of
" eternal day, and ſhew the mutual and
" ever-blooming joys of ſaints who are
" at reſt from their labours, and live for
" ever in the preſence of God! Or,
" could I change the ſcene, and unbar
" the iron gates of hell, and carry you,
" through ſolid darkneſs, to *the fire that*
" *never goes out*, and to *the worm that*

" *never dies:* Could I ſhew you the
" apoſtate angels faſt bound in eternal
" chains, or the ſouls of wicked men
" overwhelmed with torment and de-
" ſpair: Could I open your ears to
" hear the deep itſelf groan with the
" continual cries of miſery; cries which
" can never reach the throne of mercy,
" but return in ſad echoes, and add
" even to the very horrors of hell!
" Could I thus ſet before you the dif-
" ferent ends of religion and infidelity,
" you would want no other proof to
" convince you that nothing can recom-
" penſe the hazard men run of being
" for ever miſerable through unbelief."
V. iii. S. 1.

Such a train of images, heightened by the contraſt, place the ſeveral objects full before the eyes of an audience, in a manner converting their *hearing* into

ſight. Their *hopes* and *fears* are called forth, whether they will or no. The moſt ſluggiſh affections of the moſt illiterate hearer are excited in ſpite of himſelf. Who could poſſibly lend an ear to the preacher without heaving forth a wiſh at leaſt, that he might himſelf be *numbered* among the *ſaints* in *glory everlaſting?* The precept of that admirable critic QUINTILIAN, which recommends to an orator the full diſplay of all his art and powers towards the concluſion of his diſcourſe, is frequently copied out by this great prelate. "Hic ſi uſquam, "totos eloquentiæ aperire fontes licet. "Nam ſi bene diximus reliqua, poſſi- "demus jam judicum animos; & con- "fragoſis atque aſperis evecti tota pan- "dere poſſumus vela: & cum ſit max- "ima pars Epilogi Amplificatio, ver- "bis atque ſententiis uti licet magnificis "atque ornatis." L. vi. c. 1.

The proſpect of an infidel in the hour of *death* is moving and pathetic beyond expreſſion. "Then will his fears rally "their forces, and return upon him "with double ſtrength: Hell and dam- "nation will conſtantly play before his "eyes, and not ſuffer the leaſt glimpſe "of comfort to enter, nor leave him "courage to repent of his ſins, or to "fly to his laſt and only hope, the "mercy of God. To the truth of "what I ſay, witneſs the lateſt and the "bittereſt hours of dying ſinners! hours "of woe and deſpair! in which the "ſoul, conſcious of its own deſerts, "anticipates the pains of hell, and ſuf- "fers the very torments of the damned! "in which it feels the worm which "never dies beginning to gnaw, and "lies expiring amidſt the terrors of "guilt, without power either to think "of God or to forget him." V. iii. S. 1.

Many

Many a beautiful example of that ſpecies of the *Proſopopœia*, in which a certain ſpeech is put into the mouth of a real *perſonage*, occurs in this celebrated writer. The complaint of the *penitent thief* upon the croſs, conceived in theſe emphatical ſentiments and expreſſions, carries with it a vehement pathos. "Lord, I am one of thoſe ſinners for "whom thy Son now expires upon the "croſs; I was conceived in ſin and "brought forth in iniquity; I have "wandered in ignorance and darkneſs, "without the light of thy Goſpel to "direct me, without the help of thy "Spirit to protect me: Why was all my "life ſo dark, and theſe few laſt mi-"nutes only bleſſed with the know-"ledge of thy Son? Lord, accept "the poor remains of life, ſince it is "all I have left to offer: My lateſt "breath ſhall confeſs my own guilt and

" my Saviour's innocence: and ſince " thy wiſdom has united me to him in " this croſs, let me never more part " from him, but as I am joined with " him in his death, ſo let me be like- " wiſe in his life for evermore." V. ii. S. 10. The ſucceeding reply of our Lord to a dying chriſtian, when, after an hardened life of ſin and impenitence, he calls for mercy at his laſt moments, is exquiſitely pathetic. " How long " have I waited in vain for theſe prayers " and theſe ſighs? How have I ſpoken " to you by your conſcience within, " and by the miniſtry of my word from " without, and how have my calls been " deſpiſed? The gates of mercy were " always open to you, but you ſhut " them againſt yourſelf: but though " you could fly from the mercy of God, " yet his juſtice will overtake you." Paſſages of this ſort can hardly fail not only

only to warm and perſuade, but even to ſubdue the moſt careleſs and hardened ſinner in being.

A ſtriking inſtance or two of an *antitheſis*, or oppoſition, (by which things contrary are compared, to render them more evident and ſtriking) are to be met with in another diſcourſe. Taking a view of the ſtates of *good* or *bad men* in this life, he breaks forth, "View the "perſons in themſelves: On one ſide you "may ſee health and vigour attending "upon virtue, on the other, pains and diſ-"eaſes following cloſe at the heels of "vice. But if you look ſtill nearer and "examine their ſtates of mind, the diſ-"ference will appear yet greater: on one "ſide, you may ſee an undiſturbed reaſon "ſurrounded with a conſtant calm ſere-"nity, and enjoying itſelf in all the proſ-"pects that are preſented to it by things

"paſt,

" paſt, preſent, and to come: on the
" other ſide are diſturbed imaginations,
" eager deſires, perpetual uneaſineſs,
" reflections half ſtifled, and a mind ever
" labouring with unpleaſant thoughts
" of the time paſt, and the more unwel-
" come proſpects of the time to come."
Another inſtance of this *figure*, (which is ſo frequently the ſource of falſe thoughts and vicious expreſſions) can hardly be peruſed without feeling a more than ordinary *indignation* againſt our own ſhameful baſeneſs and ingratitude.
" If, ſays he, we conſider with how
" unbounced a love Chriſt embraced us
" in our loweſt ſtate of weakneſs, and
" with how cool an affection we ap-
" proached him: how much he gladly
" endured upon our account, and how
" unwillingly we ſuffer any thing upon
" his; if we reflect how earneſtly he
" labours to ſave our ſouls, and how
" careleſsly

" careleſsly and wantonly we throw
" them away; what pains and ſorrows
" he underwent to perfect our redemp-
" tion, and to what empty pleaſures we
" ſacrifice all his ſufferings, and our
" own eternal happineſs, it will ſhew
" us where the true cauſe of our
" grief lies, and how vainly we compli-
" ment our Lord, by venting our in-
" dignation againſt his antient cruci-
" fiers, which ought to be ſpent upon
" ourſelves." V. iii. S. 10.

Frequent inſtances of that *figure*, which is rather ſuited for proof, and goes under the name of a *Prolepſis* or anticipation, are to be found in him. Having made it appear that God often ſpares the *wicked* out of mercy to the *righteous*, he introduces one making this *objection* to his doctrine. " Are there
" not many ways of puniſhing men
" without

" without including others in the cala-
" mity? Do not fevers and many other
" diſtempers carry off ſingle perſons
" without ſpreading farther? And would
" not theſe be proper meſſengers of Pro-
" vidence to ſingle out deſperate ſin-
" ners?" To WHICH OBJECTION he makes this reply. " How do you know
" but that the wicked are often and
" commonly thus puniſhed? Can you
" tell by the pulſe when a fever is to
" be reckoned among the common ac-
" cidents of life, and when to be
" aſcribed to the vengeance of God?
" If not, how can you tell but that
" every hour may produce ſuch in-
" ſtances as you complain are very rare.
" —— The wicked are often exempted
" even from private judgment, that
" the righteous may not be over-
" whelmed in their ruin. For conſi-
" der; you ſee a great wicked man in
" a proſ-

" a proſperous and flouriſhing condition,
" and you think his happy tranquillity
" a perpetual reproach to the providence
" of God: What would you have done?
" You would not have God rain fire
" and brimſtone upon the city for the
" ſake of this great offender, ſince many
" innocent perſons would neceſſarily ſuf-
" fer in the ruin. No; but you would
" have God take him away ſuddenly
" by ſome ſecret and ſilent method;
" or you would have him puniſhed in
" his fortune, and reduced to that po-
" verty which his ſins deſerve. This,
" you think, would be very juſt and
" reaſonable, and highly becoming the
" wiſdom of God. But pray, has your
" wicked man no friends nor relations,
" whoſe happineſs depends upon his
" proſperity? Has he no children,
" who muſt beg with him when he
" falls

" falls into poverty and diſtreſs ?" V. iii. S. 8.

No writer is ſuperior to this excellent prelate in eaſy, familiar, and at the ſame time juſt and ſignificant alluſions. " It " is not, ſays he, in your own power " to ſin to what degree you pleaſe, or " to preſerve a ſenſe of religion amidſt " the pleaſures of iniquity. There is " a kind of mechaniſm in it as in the " growth of the body, and he that gives " himſelf up to ſin can no more reſolve " how great a ſinner he will be, than " he that is born a man can reſolve, " how tall or how ſhort of ſtature he " will be." V. ii. S. 10. And again, " When a ſickly and vitiated appetite " craves unwholſome food, who is in " the right, the patient who is eager " to gratify his appetite, or the phyſi- " cian who ſtands between him and the

" deadly

" deadly experiment? The caſe is the
" ſame in the compariſon between vir-
" tue and vice. The ſenſual man has a
" continual fever upon him, and we can
" no more judge what will render a man
" happy by obſerving the choice he
" makes for himſelf, than we can learn
" the true cure of a diſeaſe by obſerving
" the cravings of a diſtempered appe-
" tite." Speaking in another place upon the article of myſterious truths, he ſays, " With reſpect to our underſtanding, " there is no more difference between " truth that is, and truth that is not " myſterious, than with reſpect to our " ſtrength, there is between a weight " which we can lift, and a weight " which we cannot lift. For as defect " of underſtanding in us makes ſome " weights immoveable, ſo defect of un-
" derſtanding makes ſome truths to be
" myſterious."

His *metaphors* and *allegories* are to be admired for being ever uniform and conſiſtent. " The moment you give your-
" ſelf up to ſin, you give yourſelf out
" of your own power, you lay the chains
" upon the neck of reaſon, and ſet your
" paſſions free. Conſcience, which uſed
" to be your advance-guard and give
" you early notice of every approaching
" evil, falls into the power of luſt and
" affection: and when reaſon and con-
" ſcience are deſtroyed, the triple cord
" is broken, and religion muſt ſoon
" follow after; and how in this general
" rout one poor reſolution to repent of
" all his iniquity ſhould eſcape, is more
" than can be eaſily conceived, and yet
" when you loſe that, you loſe yourſelf,
" it is your laſt, your only hope." V. ii. S. 10. And in another diſcourſe we read, " Sin is the only poiſon by
" which the life of *Chriſt* which is in
" us,

" us, may be deſtroyed. It is a life " which no man can take from you but " yourſelf. Thoſe who kill the body, " cannot reach it. But every unfortu- " nate luſt, every unſubdued vice, is a " *canker* that eats into our very vitals, " and if we do not cut them off, will " in the end deſtroy us quite." V. iii. S. 11. How wonderfully do *metaphors* of this kind ſtrike the imagination and inflame us with all the warmth of the ſpeaker!

His new and judicious application of the moſt ordinary and ſimple terms in our language cannot be ſufficiently applauded. " If a man, ſays he, wants " to be *bowed down* by affliction, fevers, " agues, and all the tribe of diſtempers, " *ſtand ready to obey* the order of Provi- " dence; but there is no mark to know " a fever ſo ſent from another; there

" is no appearance of the execution of " judgment upon a perſon ſo viſited." V. iii. S. 7. And again, " Men are very " willing to *liſt* all their ſins under the *co-* " *lours* of *infirmity*, and ſo leave them to " *ſhift* for themſelves, which eaſes them " of the terror and apprehenſions of guilt, " that would otherwiſe be very unwel- " come companions to the pleaſures of " ſin." S. 9. Many of his words that approach near to vulgar, are far enough from having vulgar ſignifications.

Amidſt ſuch an aſſemblage of rare and uncommon beauties, we may deſcry and eaſily paſs over a few trivial blemiſhes. A low idiotiſm, a trifling *point* or puerility ſhall ſometimes drop from his pen. Of this ſort are theſe that follow. " It " is *ten to one* againſt you, that if you " follow the world you get nothing or " but little by it, and therefore there " are

" are the ſame *odds* on the other ſide,
" that if you follow religion, you loſe
" little or nothing by it. *As things go,*
" it is well if the pain and uneaſineſs of
" loſing the world, be not all you get
" by purſuing it." And again, " If
" it be true now, that you do wiſely in
" preferring the pleaſures of life to the
" hopes and expectations of futurity, it
" will then be true fifty years hence,
" for truth is always the ſame; and
" yet if you live to ſee that time it is
" *great odds* but that you judge other-
" wiſe." V. iv. S. 11. The harmony of his periods (than which there is ſcarce a more ordinary defect or neglect in moſt of our writers) he is ſometimes too little ſtudious about, or rather ſeems to be above paying a due regard to. By not always being diſpoſed into proper pauſes, or conſiſting of broken and precipitate *meaſures*, a few of them are deſtitute of

that *pathos* or grandeur which they would otherwiſe have. He ſhall now and then cloſe a period with a frivolous *monoſyllable*, and thereby diſappoint the *ear*. The particles (which contribute much to the force and delicacy of language) are now and then repeated in a manner not a little grating to it. The Roman *Orator* is remarkable for concluding his periods with a *verb*, in which the ſtrength of any language does principally conſiſt. And doubtleſs one reaſon why the ancient *rhetoricians* condemn ſhort *feet* at the end of a period, was, that the laſt ſyllables of a ſentence might become more audible and diſtinct. The genius of the *Engliſh* language indeed is inferior to that of the *Greek* or *Roman* in theſe two capital reſpects, viz. that it will not admit of that *tranſpoſition* of words, as well as the varying all their *declinable ones*, both *nouns* and *verbs*, by terminations,

tions, which contribute ſo greatly to the force and ſmoothneſs of their periods. Our ſubſtantives are declined only by the plural *termination*; our adjectives ſuffer no variation but in the degrees of compariſon, and our verbs are conjugated by auxiliary words. Add to this, that the ancient languages have a far more equal mixture of vowels and conſonants.

The great Dr. SOUTH abounds with beautiful inſtances of a vehement and lively *pathos*. Whether he goes about to excite our *admiration* by dwelling upon the inconceivable greatneſs of him that made us, or our *gratitude* by a bright diſplay of his redeeming mercy and love; whether he would alarm our *fears* by ſetting before us the terrors of the Lord, or animate our *hopes* by painting the happy manſions of the bleſſed above; whether he would enflame our breaſts

with a *love of virtue* by deſcribing it in all its genuine and native beauties, or fill them with an abhorrence of vice by drawing it in all its real baſeneſs and deformity, this admirable preacher hath few or no ſuperiors. A reader who is not at all touched with the following picture of a man that is at the point of death, muſt be pronounced altogether ſtupid or void of feeling. "When a "man ſhall be juſt about to quit the "ſtage of this world, to put off his "mortality and deliver up his laſt ac- "counts to God, at which ſad time his "memory ſhall ſerve him for little elſe "but to terrify him with a frightful "review of his paſt life, and his former "extravagancies ſtripped of all their "pleaſure, but retaining their guilt. "What is it then that can promiſe him "a fair paſſage into the other world, or "a comfortable appearance before his "dreadful

" dreadful Judge when he is there? " Not all the friends and intereſts, all " the riches and honours under heaven, " can ſpeak ſo much as a word for him, " or one word of comfort to him in that " condition; they may poſſibly reproach, " but they cannot relieve him. No, " at this diſconſolate time, when the " buſy tempter ſhall be more than uſu- " ally apt to vex and trouble him, and " the pains of a dying body to hinder " and diſcompoſe him, and the ſettle- " ment of worldly affairs to diſturb and " confound him; and, in a word, all " things conſpire to make his ſick bed " grievous and uneaſy, nothing can then " ſtand up againſt all theſe ruins, and " ſpeak life in the midſt of death, but a " *clear conſcience*. And the teſtimony " of that ſhall make the comforts of " heaven deſcend upon his weary head " like a refreſhing dew or ſhower upon

" a parched

" a parched ground: It ſhall bid his " ſoul go out of the body undauntedly, " and lift up its head with confidence " before ſaints and angels." Now to what is the wonderful *pathos* of ſo fine a paſſage owing, or what are the peculiar qualities in ſtile and ſentiment which are calculated to produce ſuch impreſſion on the heart of every ordinary reader? Is it not principally owing to that happy enumeration of circumſtances which ſtrike ſo forcibly upon the *imagination? At which ſad time his memory ſhall ſerve him for little elſe but to terrify him with,* &c. is touching in a ſupreme degree. *Not all the friends and intereſts, not all the riches and honours under heaven,* &c. can hardly be liſtened to without a profound ſigh. *No, at this diſconſolate time, when the buſy tempter ſhall be more than uſually apt to trouble him, and the pains of a dying body,* &c. are ſelect circumſtances

ſtances which cannot but ſtrongly affect every living mortal upon earth. Taking them away, the whole paragraph becomes dull and languid, perfectly deprived of all its vigour and nerves. If the preacher had told an audience in general terms or a ſummary way, that a good *conſcience* can only *avail* in the *hour* of *death*, he might have ſent them away altogether cold and unmoved. The truth is, we can form no diſtinct image of any thing that is ſpoken in a ſuperficial or general manner, and for that reaſon are little or nothing at all influenced by it. *

* Hoc ſpecimen eſt popularis *Judicii*, in quo nunquam fuit populo cum doctis intelligentibuſque diſſentio. Ut ex nervorum ſono in fidibus, quam ſcienter ii pulſi ſint intelligi ſolet, ſic ex animorum motu cernitur, quid tractandis perficiet Orator.

CIC. de Orat.

His

His animated deſcription of the horror and confuſion which a ſinner will be overwhelmed with, when he ſtands arraigned at the dreadful tribunal of heaven, cannot but affect him in a ſenſible manner even at this diſtance. "When "(ſays the perſuaſive orator) he ſhall "look about and ſee his accuſer, his "Judge, the witneſſes all of them his "remorſeleſs adverſaries; the law im-"pleading; mercy and the goſpel up-"braiding him; the devil, his grand "accuſer, drawing his indictment, num-"bering his ſins with the greateſt ex-"actneſs, and aggravating them with "the cruelleſt bitterneſs; and conſci-"ence, like a thouſand witneſſes, at-"teſting every article, flying in his face, "and rending his very heart. And then "after all, Chriſt, from whom only "mercy could be expected, owning the "accuſation. It will be hell enough to "hear

" hear the ſentence: the very promul-
" gation of the puniſhment will be part
" of the puniſhment and anticipate the
" execution——every word will come
" upon the ſinner like an arrow ſtriking
" through his reins, like thunder that
" is heard and conſumes at the ſame
" inſtant. Yea, it will be a denial
" with ſcorn, with taunting exproba-
" tions; and to be miſerable without
" commiſeration is the heighth of mi-
" ſery. If there could be any room for
" comfort after the ſentence of damna-
" tion, it would be this, to be executed
" in ſecret, to periſh unobſerved. But
" when a man's folly muſt be ſpread
" open before the angels, and all his
" baſeneſs ript up before thoſe pure
" ſpirits, this will be a double hell."
V. ii. S. 2. How full, pictureſque, and circumſtantial is this account of the great and terrible day of the Lord! How is

each intelligent and ſerious chriſtian alternately ſeized with *pity* and *terror* from one end of it to the other!

Many an inſtance of that *figure* which is of all others moſt productive of the *pathos*, I mean the *Proſopopœia*, occurs in this excellent writer. To make mention only of the following one. "When "Chriſt ſhall have cleared up men's ap-"prehenſions about the value of things, "he will propoſe that worthy prize for "which he was denied: he will hold "it up to open view and call upon "men and angels, Behold, look, here's "that piece of dirt, that windy ap-"plauſe, that poor tranſitory pleaſure, "that contemptible danger for which "I was diſhonoured, my truths diſ-"owned, and for which life, eternity, "and God himſelf was ſcorned and "trampled upon by this ſinner: judge,

"all

" all the world, whether what he de-
" ſpiſed in the other life, he deſerves
" to enjoy in this." Methinks the preacher throws a bluſh and confuſion into the face of every ſinner who ſat at his feet. Does he not already ſtand condemned by himſelf as well as by all the world beſide?

If you would meet with an illuſtrious example of (what *Cicero* calls the greateſt commendation of *eloquence*) *amplification*, peruſe his diſcourſe upon this *text*, contained in the third volume——*For the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.* The orator, with a view of enlarging our idea of the *greatneſs* of *Chriſt*'s ſuffering, and thereby rendering it more ſenſible and affecting, hath pathetically dwelt upon theſe three particulars, the *latitude* and *extent* of his *ſuffering*——the *intenſeneſs* and *ſharpneſs* of it——the *perſon inflicting*

flicting it. The perſon who could liſten to him without the loweſt degree of feeling or emotion, hardly deſerves the name, I do not ſay of a *chriſtian*, but of a *man*.

If you would have a practical lively conviction of this great truth, that *religion* is the only ſource of pure and laſting *pleaſure*, read his incomparable diſcourſe upon "*Her ways are ways of pleaſant-*" *neſs*." Every ſyllable which he utters ſtrikes through the heart like a new light, and ſhews the ſinner how he hath miſtaken or deviated from the path of even *pleaſure* itſelf. It is ſcarce poſſible for the reader not to be enamoured of virtue, and almoſt envious againſt its true votaries, who beholds the faſcinating charms of the former, as well as the inexpreſſible happineſs of the latter, drawn at full length by this excellent *divine*.

How

How can it be ſufficiently regretted that an orator of this rank ſhould ſtill abound with ſo many glaring faults. His rapid imagination, like the Peruvian torrents, at the ſame time that it brings down precious gold, is apt to mingle a quantity of coarſe ſand along with it.

Many of his *ſimilitudes* and *alluſions* are intolerably groſs and indelicate. "When reaſon, ſays he, by the aſſiſt-"ance of *grace*, has prevailed over and "outgrown the encroachments of ſenſe, "the delights of ſenſuality are to ſuch "a one but as a hobby-horſe would be "to a counſellor of ſtate, or as taſteleſs "as a bundle of hay would be to a "hungry lion." And in another place we read:—"As no man would think it "a deſirable thing to preſerve the *itch* "upon himſelf only for the pleaſure of "ſcratching, ſo neither can any man

" that would be faithful to his reaſon,
" yield his ear to be bored through by
" his domineering appetites only for
" thoſe poor thin gratifications of ſen-
" ſuality that they are able to reward
" him with." Again, ſpeaking of *pe-nance*, he full pleaſantly breaks forth,
" If a man's religion lies no deeper than
" his ſkin, it is poſſible that he may
" ſcourge himſelf into very great im-
" provements, but he will find that
" neither pride, nor luſt, nor coveteouſ-
" neſs, was ever mortified by corporal
" diſcipline: and however men may
" deceive themſelves, or others, they
" may as well expect to bring a cart as
" a ſoul to heaven by ſuch means."

His metaphors and images are equally low and ſordid. Of this ſort are the following:——" Sin hath feſtered in-
" wardly, and the great Phyſician of

" Souls muſt launce the impoſtem, to
" let out death with the ſuppuration."
And in another place——" Is any thing
" more the object of ſcorn and con-
" tempt than the drunkard? Men ab-
" hor, loath, and deſpiſe him, and
" would even ſpit at him as they met
" him, was it not for fear that a ſto-
" mach ſo overcharged ſhould ſome-
" thing more than ſpit at him again."
And again——" The ſenſual epicure
" will find that there is a certain *living*
" *ſpark* within him, which all the drink
" he can pour in will never be able to
" quench or put out, nor will his much
" abuſed body have it in its power to
" convey any putrefying, conſuming,
" rotting quality to the ſoul: No,
" there is no *drinking*, or *ſwearing*, or
" *ranting*, or *fluxing* a ſoul out of its
" immortality."

What a heap of vulgar and abject expreſſions, that cannot but deform and degrade the beſt thoughts, might be collected out of many a diſcourſe! Speaking of his own profeſſion, he hath this remark expreſſed after the following ſort: "While there is any thing of "revenue either to ſupport the dignity "of their function or procure a com-"mon reſpect to their perſons, they "ſhall be followed with the odious, "falſe, and baſe imputations of pride, "coveteouſneſs and luxury *ſtill rattling* "*about their ears*, and whatever elſe "the envy of a gaping avarice and a "domineering inſolence can *belch* out "againſt them." And in another diſcourſe he ſays, "Before you fly to the "old ſtale pretence that thou canſt "not relieve the needs of thy poor "brother, conſider with yourſelf that "there is a God who is not to be

"*flamm'd*

" *flamm'd off* with lies; and next con-
" ſider, that it is not the beſt huſban-
" dry in the world to be *damned* to *ſave*
" *charges.*" And again, " God com-
" manded and told man what was good,
" but the devil *ſurnamed* it *evil*, and
" thereby baffled the command, and
" *turned the world topſy-turvy.*"

Some of his ſentiments are too much pointed, and a few degenerate into down-right *puns*. " To *face* God and out-
" *face* man with the ſacrament and a
" lie in one's mouth together, will not
" the world be induced to look upon
" my *religion* as a *lie*, if I allow myſelf
" to *lie* for my *religion.*" And again, ſpeaking of certain men of a double heart, he gives this ſage caution: " If
" a man will be but ſo true to himſelf
" as to obſerve ſuch perſons exactly,
" he ſhall generally ſpy ſuch falſe lines

" and ſuch a ſly treacherous ſleer upon
" their faces, that he ſhall be ſure to
" have a *caſt* of their eye to warn him,
" before they give him a *caſt* of their
" nature to betray him."

In ſome places the language is perhaps elevated above the tone of the ſentiment, and in a few others the ſentiments, inſtead of being juſt and great, are rather extravagant and ſwelling. We may, in part, apply to him what QUINTILIAN lays to the charge of certain orators of his own age: " Falluntur plurimum,
" qui vitioſum & corruptum dicendi
" genus, quod aut verborum licentiâ
" reſultat, aut immodico tumore tur-
" geſcit, aut præcipitia pro ſublimibus
" habet, aut ſpecie libertatis inſanit,
" magis exiſtimant populare atque plau-
" ſibile." l. xii. Let me only juſt add, that a few of his diſcourſes may be conſidered

conſidered in the light of ſatyrs, rather than of *ſermons*.

Biſhop ATTERBURY, who poſſeſſed in an eminent degree the talents of a good ear, an elegant judgment, and correct expreſſion, excels in ſtirring up the *paſſions*. This admirable preacher will furniſh us with many a beautiful example of thoſe *figures* of *ſentences*, which are peculiarly adapted to move and influence them.

There is ſcarce a *figure* in *rhetorick* more productive of the impreſſion of *pathos* than that which goes under the name of an *apoſtrophe*, and there is hardly a finer inſtance of that figure than the following one in a diſcourſe of this celebrated writer. Touching in a ſupreme degree is his immediate addreſs to the *bleſſed Jeſus*, when, breaking off from the

ſeries of his diſcourſe, the orator exclaims, " Look down then upon us " from thy croſs, bleſſed *Jeſu'*, draw " us and we will run after thee, not " only with willing but chearful minds. " We will trace all thy ſteps from Beth- " lehem to Cavalry; we will imitate " thee to the beſt of our power in all " the ſtages and conditions of thy life, " in what thou didſt, and in what thou " ſufferedſt: We will ſet thee before " us in every caſe, and ſay, Would my " Saviour have thus and thus behaved " himſelf in theſe circumſtances; would " he have yielded to ſuch a temptation, " or declined ſuch a conflict; would he " have reſented ſuch an injury, or felt " the leaſt diſcompoſure of mind upon " ſuch an affront.——Why then ſhould " I who have his example to guide, his " promiſe of an exceeding reward to " encourage, and his grace to ſuſtain

" me,

" me. *Nay, but draw us, bleſſed Jeſu!*
" and we will run after thee, we will
" follow thee, O Lamb, whitherſoever
" thou goeſt." The repetition of—*Nay, but draw us, bleſſed Jeſu,* &c. hath ſomething in it exquiſitely tender and paſſionate, and cannot fail to pleaſe and affect every reader in a ſenſible manner. Of the like ſtamp is another inſtance of this *figure* which occurs in a *ſermon*, where he is ſhewing how abundantly full to all the purpoſes of conviction the teſtimony of the apoſtles was concerning *Chriſt's reſurrection*. " And if it be,
" ſays he, are we not very unreaſonable
" and abſurd in complaining that a fact
" was not atteſted with ten times more
" evidence than was needful. " *Nay,*
" *but who art thou, O man,* who, whilſt
" thou acknowledgeſt the wiſdom and
" goodneſs of God to be ſufficiently
" juſtified in his own method, will yet
" preſcribe

" preſcribe to him the uſe of thine." How wonderfully more ſtriking and pathetic is, *Nay, but who art thou, O man,* than if the preacher had coldly ſaid in general, *the man who acknowledges the wiſdom and goodneſs of God to be, &c.*

Many a beautiful example of that *figure* by which a diſcourſe is enlivened and thrown more forcibly along, I mean *interrogation,* is to be met with in ſeveral of his diſcourſes. To quote but a ſingle one, which is rendered ſtill more intereſting by the *anaphora* that holds the audience in an agreeable ſuſpence from one end of this excellent paragraph to the other. " Have we then, ſays the per-
" ſuaſive orator, lived according to the
" fleſh, or according to the ſpirit?
" Have we exerciſed ourſelves in the
" ſevere and rugged parts of our duty,
" or have we choſen for our lot the gra-
" tifications

" tifications of ſenſe and vain pleaſures
" which did not profit us? Have we
" called ourſelves often to account for
" our miſcarriages, and made a ſerious,
" ſtrict, and impartial ſcrutiny into our
" paſt lives and actions? Have we felt
" the ſpirit of compunction and contri-
" tion moving in our hearts, and con-
" demning us for our tranſgreſſions?
" Have we deplored them? Have we
" prayed and ſtriven againſt them, and
" applied thoſe harſh and wholeſome
" remedies, which the chriſtian religion
" preſcribes for the cure of ſuch diſ-
" eaſes, faſting, ſelf-denial, and morti-
" fication? Have we experienced the
" afflicting hand of God laying hold of
" us when we tranſgreſſed, and gently
" leading us back into the paths of vir-
" tue, from which we had ſwerved,
" by reaſonable and merciful chaſtiſe-
" ments?" How comparatively flat and

languid

languid would this paſſage become if thrown out of this animating *figure!* The queſtions ſucceeding one another impoſe upon the hearers a belief that they come directly from the mouth of the preacher without ſtudy or premeditation! And the paſſions never work more ſtrongly, than when what is uttered ſeems to be perfectly void of all art, or to riſe naturally, and as it were of its own accord, from the ſubject itſelf.

Nor are there wanting in this great prelate frequent examples of that *figure* which is uſed by CICERO to expreſs ſuch a variety of paſſions, viz. *exclamation*. To ſingle out only the following one, which will pleaſe and affect the devout and intelligent reader even upon a *tenth* peruſal. "O! the ſweet contentment, "the tranquillity and profound reſt of "mind that he enjoys, who is a friend

"of

" of God, and to whom God is there-
" fore a friend; who hath gotten looſe
" from all meaner purſuits and is re-
" gardleſs of all lower advantages that
" interfere with his great deſign of
" knowing and loving God, and being
" known and beloved by him; who
" lives as in his ſight always, looks up
" to him in every ſtep of his conduct,
" imitates him to the beſt of his power,
" believes him without doubt, and obeys
" him without reſerve; deſires to do
" nothing but what is agreeable to his
" will, and reſolves to fear nothing be-
" yond or beſide his diſpleaſure; in a
" word, who hath reſigned all his
" paſſions and appetites to him, all his
" faculties and powers, and given up
" his ſoul to be poſſeſſed by him with-
" out a rival!" Is it poſſible for us to liſten to the truly *Chriſtian Orator* without heaving forth a fervent wiſh at leaſt,

that we ourſelves were poſſeſſed of this *ſweet contentment, this tranquillity* and *profound reſt of mind?* Do we not almoſt feel a kind of envy at the perſon whom we really take to be in full poſſeſſion of it? Nay, are we not in a ſort partakers of it at the very inſtant of liſtening to him, by having our affections for a ſeaſon raiſed from earthly and temporal to heavenly and eternal objects.

How pathetic, how admirably expreſſive of a certain mixture of *indignation* and *ſurpriſe*, which every *hearer* ſhares in common with the preacher himſelf, is the exordium of his inimitable *ſermon* upon the *incarnation* of the *Son of God!* "And can any man be "offended in thee, bleſſed Jeſu', who "haſt undertook and done and ſuffered "ſo much for all men; who willingly "emptiedſt thyſelf of all thy glory,

"lefteſt

" leſteſt heaven and the boſom of thy " father for our ſakes? Can a deſign " of ſo much goodneſs ever miſcarry " by the folly of thoſe on whoſe very " account it was undertaken? Can " ſuch a meſſage of love (of a love " aſtoniſhing and infinite) be rejected? " Canſt thou thyſelf the great meſſen- " ger be received any otherwiſe than " with open arms and hearts, of all thy " creatures for whoſe redemption thou " waſt thus made fleſh and dwelt among " us? Is it poſſible for any of them " to be any ways offended in thee? " Yet ſo it is, bleſſed Lord! that from " thy firſt coming in the fleſh to this " time, there have been unreaſonable " men all along that have taken offence " at thee." V. iii. S. 3.

No preacher beſide hath given more attention to, or ſucceeded better in, the ſmoothneſs

ſmoothneſs and harmony of his numbers. By muſically diſpoſing, and artfully connecting the moſt common terms in our language, he hath clothed all his periods in a kind of pomp and exaltation. All his diſcourſes are worked off with ſuch ſkill and ingenuity, as to require none at all in his hearers to underſtand or comprehend them. The moſt illiterate perſon could not but feel an uncommon pleaſure in hearing him

Pour the full tide of eloquence along
Serenely pure, and yet divinely ſtrong,
Rich with the treaſures of each foreign tongue.

POPE.

This great writer himſelf hath, methinks, in a few places, drawn out the *thread of his verboſity finer than the ſtaple of his argument*. Nor hath he enough ſtudied a mixture of long and ſhort periods,

riods, ſometimes beginning a ſermon with the former, before the hearers attention is thoroughly engaged. Short ſentences that carry any pungency or acuteneſs with them by returning quick awaken the mind and raiſe the paſſions. His long and tuneful periods ſhall often move too ſlow to ſtrike them. The arrangement, the cadence, the length of the members which they are compoſed of, are alſo perhaps not ſufficiently diverſified.

TILLOTSON's diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic is a pathetic ſimplicity. That leading beauty of a diſcourſe, unity of deſign, is viſible throughout them all. His method, or diſtribution of a ſubject into its ſeveral heads, is no other than that which plain ſenſe and the ſubject itſelf require. His proofs are never too elaborate or above the level of his hear-

ers, but ariſing directly from his ſubject ſeem to offer themſelves of their own accord. All his ſentiments are ſimple, and ſometimes exquiſitely noble. The diction is natural and eaſy, neither ſordid and vulgar on the one hand, nor bloated and ſwelling on the other. The periods are ſmooth and flowing, not puffed up into the bombaſt, or running into the poetical.

A man's heart muſt be as cold as marble that is not touched with the few plain ſimple words which the following paragraph is made up of. "If we would "weigh the concernments of this life and "the next in a juſt and equal balance, we "ſhould be aſhamed to miſplace our dili-"gence and induſtry as we do; to beſtow "our beſt thoughts and time about theſe "vain and periſhing things, and take "no care about that better part which

"cannot

" cannot be taken away. Fond and
" vain men that we are, who are ſo
" ſollicitous how we ſhall paſs a few
" days in this world, but matter not
" what ſhall become of us for ever.
" But as careleſs as we are now about
" theſe things, time will come when
" we ſhall ſadly lay them to heart, and
" when they will touch us to the quick:
" when we come to lay on a death-bed,
" if God ſhould be pleaſed to grant us
" then ſo much of time and uſe of our
" reaſon as to be able to recollect our-
" ſelves, we ſhall be convinced how
" great a neceſſity there was of minding
" our ſouls, and of the prodigious
" folly of neglecting them, and of our
" not being ſenſible of the value of
" them till we are ready to deſpair of
" ſaving them.——Could I repreſent to
" you that inviſible world which I am
" ſpeaking of, you would all readily aſ-

" ſent to this counſel, and be glad to
" follow it, and put it ſpeedily in prac-
" tice: do but then open your eyes and
" look a little before you to the things
" which are not far off from any of
" us, and to many of us may perhaps
" be much nearer than we are aware: let
" us but judge of things now as we
" ſhall ſhortly judge of them, and let
" us live now as after a few days we
" ſhall wiſh with all our hearts that we
" had lived, and be as ſerious as if we
" were ready to ſtep into the other
" world, and enter upon that change
" which death will quickly make in
" every one of us. Strange ſtupidity!
" that a change ſo near, ſo great, ſo
" certain, ſhould affect us ſo coldly and
" be ſo little conſidered by us; that the
" things of time ſhould move us ſo
" much, and the things of eternity ſo
" little: what will we do when this

" change

" change comes if we have made no
" preparation for it?" S. xxxiv.

The moſt careleſs ſinner cannot but feel the weight of every ſyllable which drops from the preacher's lips, and feeling ſtand aghaſt at his own unutterable folly and madneſs. He cannot but appear in the light of an aſtoniſhing *prodigy* even to himſelf. All that is ſaid coming from the heart, cannot but go directly to it.

The *irony* contained in the words that follow is affecting in the laſt degree. " Do, do, ſinner, abuſe and neglect thy-
" ſelf yet a little longer, till the time
" of regarding thy ſoul and working
" out thine own ſalvation be at an end,
" and all the opportunities of minding
" your great concernment be ſlipped
" out of thy hands, never to be reco-
" vered, never to be called back again,
" no not by the moſt earneſt wiſhes and

" deſires, by the moſt fervent prayers " and tears, and thou be brought into " the condition of prophane *Eſau*, who " for once deſpiſing the bleſſing loſt it " for ever, and found no place for re- " pentance, though he ſought it care- " fully with tears." V. i. S. 14. How infinitely perſuaſive is that plainneſs and ſimplicity of thought and expreſſion which runs through the diſcourſes of this admirable writer, a ſimplicity which gives weight, dignity, and authority to them, a ſimplicity which excludes the glare and multiplicity of ornaments on the one hand, as well as the abjectneſs and ruſticity of diction on the other.

The following ſpeech put into the mouth of a dying ſinner is exquiſitely *moving* and *pathetic*. " Can we think " it fit to ſay thus to God in a dying " hour:—Lord, now the world leaves " me,

" me, I come to thee: I pray thee give
" me eternal life, who could never af-
" ford to give thee one good day of my
" life: grant that I may live with thee
" and enjoy thee for ever, who could
" never endure to think upon thee: I
" muſt confeſs that I could never be
" perſuaded to leave my ſins out of
" love to thee, but now I repent of
" them for fear of thee: I am con-
" ſcious to myſelf that I would never
" do any thing for thy ſake, but yet I
" hope thy goodneſs is ſuch that thou
" wilt forgive all the ungodlineſs of
" my life, and accept of this forced
" ſubmiſſion which I now make to
" thee: I pray thee do not fruſtrate at
" laſt and diſappoint me in this deſign
" which I have laid, of ſinning while
" I live, and getting to heaven when I
" die." S. 10.

This excellent preacher hath ſometimes had recourſe to ridicule, which is conſidered by the beſt writers * of antiquity as no other than a ſpecies of *eloquence*. He hath ſhewed how that wea-

* TULLY, in his ſecond *Book de Oratore*, diſcuſſing the ſeveral topics of *rhetorick*, at length ſpeaks thus of *ridicule*. "Eſt plané Oratoris, movere riſum. "Res ſæpe, quas argumentis dilui non facile eſt, "joco riſuque diſſolvit.—Locus autem & regio "quaſi ridiculi, turpitudine quadam & deformitate "continetur—materies omnis ridiculorum eſt in "iſtis vitiis—quæ neque odiomagno, nec miſeri-"cordiâ maxima digna ſunt." QUINTILIAN, in the ſixth *Book* of his *Inſtitutions*, conſidering ridicule as a branch of eloquence, lays down rules for its efficacy and reſtraint. "Riſum judicis movendo, & "illos triſtes ſolvit affectus & animum ab intentione "rerum frequentur avertit & aliquando etiam reficit, "& a ſatietate vel fatigatione renovat.—Ea quæ "dicit vir bonus, omnia ſalvâ dignitate & verecun-"diâ dicet: nimium enim riſus pretium eſt, ſi pro-"bitatis impendio conſtat."——See ARIS. Rhet. l. iii. c. 10.

pon

pon may be put to a right uſe, which hath ſo often fought the battles of impiety and profaneneſs. With what genuine ſtrokes of humour hath he deſcribed the more indirect and artificial ways of *ſlander* in his diſcourſe againſt *evil-ſpeaking!* "The deepeſt wounds, "ſays he, are many times given by "*aſking queſtions*, as, have you not heard "*ſo and ſo* of ſuch a man? I ſay no "more, I only aſk the queſtion. Or "by *general intimations*, as, I am loth to "ſay what I have heard of ſuch a one, "am very ſorry for it, and do not at all "believe it, if you will believe them: "and this many times without telling "you the thing, but leaving you in the "dark to ſuſpect the worſt.——If they "hear any good of their adverſaries, "with what nicety and caution do they "receive it! How many objections do "they raiſe againſt it! And with what

" coldneſs do they at laſt admit it! It
" is very well, ſay they, if it be true:
" I ſhall be glad to hear it confirmed:
" I never heard ſo much good of him
" before: You are a good man yourſelf,
" but have a care you be not deceived."
Making mention of impertinence and curioſity as ſpecial cauſes of evil-ſpeaking, he proceeds with the like vein of pleaſantry, ſaying, " Some perſons love
" to mingle themſelves in all buſineſs,
" and are loth to ſeem ignorant of ſo
" important a piece of news as the faults
" and follies of men, or any bad thing
" that is talked of in good company.
" And therefore they do, with great
" care, pick up ill ſtories as good mat-
" ter of diſcourſe in the next company
" that is worthy of them: and this
" perhaps not out of any great malice,
" but for want of ſomething better to
" talk of, and becauſe their parts lie
" chiefly

" chiefly that way." Raillery of this ſort comes in to the aid of argument, becauſe its impreſſions on the imagination are conſiſtent with the real nature of things. Of how different a ſtamp or character is that which only becomes an inſtrument of deceit, by ſtriking the fancy and affections with fictitious images!

The *alluſions* and *ſimilies* which are frequent in him, are pertinent and judicious, being for the moſt part drawn from common life. " One would be " apt to think it, ſays he, a very vain " thing to diſſuade men from being " miſerable, to uſe great vehemency of " argument to hinder a man from *leap-* " *ing* into a *pit*, or from *running* into " the *fire*, to take great pains to argue a " *ſick* man into a deſire of *health*, and " to make a *priſoner* contented to have " his *ſhackles* knocked off, and be ſet

" at

" at liberty: but yet we ſee in expe-
" rience that ſin is a thing of ſo ſtupi-
" fying a nature as to make men inſen-
" ſible of their danger, although it be
" ſo near and ſo terrible. It is not ſo
" with men in other caſes.——When
" we labour of any bodily diſtemper,
" it is much to find a man that is pa-
" tient of his *diſeaſe*, but when our
" ſouls are mortally ſick, that we ſhould
" be fond of our diſeaſe, that we ſhould
" fight with our phyſician and ſpurn
" at our remedy, this ſurely is the
" height of diſtraction." S. 10. And again. " If a man be travelling to
" ſuch a place, ſo ſoon as he finds him-
" ſelf out of the way, he preſently ſtops
" and makes towards the right, and
" hath no inclination to go wrong any
" farther; if a man be ſick, he will be
" well preſently if he can, and not put
" it off for the future: Moſt men will

" gladly

" gladly take the firſt opportunity that
" preſents itſelf of being rich or great:
" do thou then ſo much more in mat-
" ters ſo much greater. Return from
" the error of thy ways, be wiſe, ſave
" thyſelf as ſoon as poſſibly thou canſt.
" When happineſs preſents itſelf to
" thee, do not turn it off and bid it
" come again to-morrow: perhaps thou
" mayſt never be ſo fairly offered again,
" perhaps the day of ſalvation may not
" come again to-morrow, nay, perhaps
" to thee to-morrow may never come.
" But if we were ſure that happineſs
" would come again, yet why ſhould
" we put it off? Does any man know
" how to be ſafe and happy to-day, and
" can he find in his heart to tarry till
" to-morrow?" The preacher makes himſelf as it were familiar with his people, and thereby ſlides imperceptibly into their hearts.

Not

Not a ſingle word hath he uſed but which is ſo clear and perſpicuous, that the loweſt perſon in the congregation cannot but underſtand it. Not a ſyllable hath he uttered but what each individual preſent muſt give his direct aſſent to; and his perſuaſion is not ſo much the effect of what he hears, as of the dictates of his own mind and heart.

The *exclamation* that follows carries with it no ordinary *pathos*. Having demonſtrated that the happineſs of a life to come is incomparably ſuperior to any which the preſent can afford, both in degree and duration, the orator, in the warmth and fervor of his ſpirit, breaks forth, "O vaſt *eternity!* how doſt thou "ſwallow up our thoughts, and enter-"tain us at once with delight and "amazement! This is the very top "and higheſt pitch of our happineſs,

" upon which we may ſtand ſecure and
" look down with ſcorn upon all things
" here below, and how ſmall and in-
" conſiderable do they appear to us,
" compared with the vaſt and endleſs
" enjoyments of our future ſtate! But
" oh vain and fooliſh ſouls! that are ſo
" little concerned for eternity, that for
" the trifles of time and the *pleaſures*
" of *ſin*, which are but for a *ſeaſon*,
" can find in our hearts to forfeit an
" everlaſting felicity. Bleſſed God!
" why haſt thou prepared ſuch a happi-
" neſs for thoſe who neither conſider it
" nor ſeek after it? Why is *ſuch* a
" price put into the hands of *fools*, who
" have no heart to make uſe of it, who
" fondly chuſe to gratify their luſts ra-
" ther than to ſave their ſouls, and ſot-
" tiſhly prefer the temporary enjoyments
" of ſin before a bleſſed immortality."
S. 8.

What

What invincible perſuaſion do the vigorous *interrogations* of this ſort carry along with them: "Is he a *prudent* "man as to his temporal eſtate, that "lays deſigns only for a day, without "any proſpect to or proviſion for the "remaining part of his life? even ſo "does he that provides for the ſhort "time of this life, but takes no care "for all eternity; which is to be wiſe "for a moment, but a fool for ever.— "Do we count him a wiſe man, who "is wiſe in any thing but his own "proper profeſſion and employment, "wiſe for every body but himſelf; who "is ingenious to contrive his own mi- "ſery and to do himſelf a miſchief, but "is dull and ſtupid as to the deſigning "of any real benefit and advantage to "himſelf? Such a one is he who is "ingenious in his calling, but a bad "chriſtian.——Is it wiſdom in any man

" man to neglect and diſoblige him who
" is his beſt friend, and can be his ſoreſt
" enemy? or with one weak troop to
" go out to meet him that comes againſt
" him with thouſands of thouſands; to
" fly a ſmall danger and run upon a
" greater? Thus does every man that
" neglects and contemns God, *who can*
" *ſave* or *deſtroy* him, who fears them
" that *can kill the body, &c.* Is not he
" an imprudent man, who, in matters
" of greateſt moment and concernment,
" neglects opportunities never to be
" retrieved; who, ſtanding upon the
" ſhore, and ſeeing the tide making
" haſte towards him apace, and that he
" hath but a few minutes to ſave him-
" ſelf, yet will lay himſelf to ſleep
" there till the *cruel* ſea ruſh in upon
" him and overwhelm him? And is
" he any better who trifles away this
" day of God's grace and patience, and

" fooliſhly adjourns the neceſſary work
" of repentance, and the weighty buſi-
" neſs of religion, to a dying hour?
" Is he wiſe, who hopes to attain the
" end without the means, nay by means
" that are quite contrary to it? Such
" is every man who hopes to be bleſſed
" hereafter without being holy here,
" and to be happy in the enjoyment of
" God and the company of holy ſpirits,
" by rendering himſelf as unſuitable
" and unlike to them as he can. Would
" you be truly wiſe, be wiſe for thyſelf,
" wiſe for thy ſoul, wiſe for eternity."
S. i. In fine, every thing is plain and natural, pathetic and ſincere. All he ſays is founded upon the moſt ſolid reaſons, upon the moſt inconteſtible principles. A character of good ſenſe, of truth, of candour, of gravity, of diſintereſtedneſs, is eminently diſplayed throughout each Sermon.

And

And yet this *ſimpleſt* of all writers hath been himſelf betrayed into a poor *play* of *words*. "Man, ſays he, is apt "to grieve for what he cannot *help*, "and perhaps the juſteſt cauſe of his "grief is that he cannot help it, for if "he could, inſtead of grieving for it "he *would help it*. It troubles him that "things are out of his power, and that "he cannot help his being *troubled* at "it." A few *hackneyed* and *vulgar* phraſes are not to be defended, of which ſort are theſe: "The prieſt is "ſent for to *patch up* their conſciences "—they make no preparation for death, "though it *dogs them at the heels*." There may in a few places be found alſo a repetition and languor of *ſentiments*. Nor hath he always given that attention to the *harmony* of his periods as might be wiſhed. By drawing them out ſometimes to too great a length, he hath ſuf-

fered their life and ſpirit to evaporate, their grandeur and *pathos* to languiſh and relax.

Our *bleſſed Lord* is entitled to no ordinary place in the liſt of pathetic writers. Each of his diſcourſes is an ingot of gold intrinſically and ſolidly valuable. Every tender and paſſionate ſtring that belongs to the heart of man is ſkilfully touched in one or other of them. This great teacher does not merely addreſs himſelf to our *reaſon*, which in moſt men is but weak, but to our *ſenſes* and *paſſions*. A few naked *precepts*, however juſt and weighty in themſelves, are thrown away upon the many. Their hearts are only to be penetrated or conquered by plain, full, and intereſting examples. All our Saviour's parables are in this view admirable. Full of the nobleſt imagery and juſteſt morals, they

are

are wonderfully calculated to excite a ſtrong ſenſe of the *vanity* and *emptineſs* of all things here below, and raiſe our hearts to a divine temper by a deep conviction of the tranſcendent worth and excellency of the *things* that are *above*; to prove the inherent baſeneſs of vice, together with that miſery which is inſeparable from it, as well as the genuine charms of virtue, together with that happineſs which is ſure to go along with it. "The judgment and underſtanding (ſays the great PASCAL) have their "proper method, which is by principles and demonſtrations. The heart "and affections have a method altogether different. A man would expoſe "himſelf very remarkably who ſhould "go about to engage our love by laying "down in a philoſophical order the "ſprings and cauſes of that paſſion. "Our bleſſed *Lord* and St. *Paul* have

" oftener uſed the method of the heart,
" which is that of charity, than the
" other of reaſon and judgment, becauſe
" the principal deſign of their diſcourſes
" was not ſo much to inform as to
" excite and enflame."

Let us ſingle out a few of thoſe parables (which may be conſidered as ſo many living pictures of the qualities and affections of humanity ſubjected to the eye) that are happily formed to awaken the moſt lethargic, or alarm the moſt preſumptuous ſinner upon earth.

The parable of the *ten virgins* contains in it the moſt pointed and awful appeal to the conſciences, the ſtrongeſt addreſſes to the hopes and fears of mankind. Our common nature obliges us to enter into the diſtreſs of the *five fooliſh* with an exquiſite ſenſibility, leſt their

their caſe ſhould one day become our own. When we hear them exclaiming in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, the tear of compaſſion ſteals down our cheeks whether we will or no. Their hearts muſt be frozen indeed, which are ſuſceptible of no *feeling* or *impreſſion*, upon liſtening to the ſentence of eternal baniſhment from his preſence: *Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.* That awful warning which the parable is cloſed with, cannot be heard without ſome degree of emotion by any mortal living: *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.* Matt. xxv. After ſuch a plain and expreſs declaration on the part of heaven, ſhall we not all agree, that it argues a man bereſt of common ſenſe to defer another minute *the trimming of his own lamp?* Is not the loweſt degree of procraſtina-

tion on our part the groſſeſt of all miſtakes, the moſt egregious of all follies?

When our Lord would make us thoroughly ſenſible of the profound folly of ſetting our hearts upon *riches*, was it poſſible for him to do it in a warmer and more effectual manner than in the *parable* of the *rich man* in the *Goſpel*? His congratulatory ſpeech of *Soul, Soul, thou haſt goods laid up for many years; take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*; is admirably expreſſive of his inward frame of mind, ſo altogether repugnant to the ſpirit of that religion which Chriſt taught. But what a ſudden veil was drawn over all his full-blown joys by the reply which God arreſted him with in the midſt of his unhallowed ſoliloquy! *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee; then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?*

vided? are words that could not but enter, like daggers, into his affrighted ears, and *harrow up* his fooliſh ſoul.

Of the like ſtamp is that truly affecting parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* in the ſixteenth chapter of St. Luke. The horrible end of a *voluptuous* life, or one that is paſſed away in vanity, and among the ſhadows of pomp and greatneſs, was never placed in a more ſtriking point of view. *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedſt thy good things,* &c. are words that carry with them a more than ordinary *pathos*. The ſoul of a reader is thrilled with horror at liſtening to that irreverſible ſentence which directly follows: *Beſides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, ſo that they which would paſs from hence to you cannot, neither can they paſs to us that would come*

come from thence. ver. 26. There is ſomething too wonderfully *paſſionate* in the reply of the rich man, deeply concerned for the fate of his brethren whom he had left behind him. *I pray thee therefore, father Abraham, that thou would ſend Lazarus to my father's houſe, for I have five brethren, that he may teſtify to them, leſt they alſo come into this place of torment.* The man, who is now employing his great advantages of rank and fortune to no higher purpoſes than the ſelfiſh gratification of his own irregular luſts, would do well to engrave this *parable* with an iron pen upon his heart, never to be eraſed. When he is removed from all thoſe objects which are apt to gratify him, he will naturally become his own tormentor, and cheriſh in himſelf thoſe painful habits of mind which are called in ſcripture phraſe, *the worm which never dies.*

Beautiful

Beautiful and touching is the *parable* of the *prodigal ſon*. It is no other than a juſt and ſimple painting of the heart, borrowed from common experience. Mark that pride and inſolence of ſpirit, which often grows out of youth, upon demanding of his father the portion which fell to his lot. *Father*, (ſays he, in a manner little conſiſtent with the loweſt degree of filial piety) *give me the portion of goods that falleth to me*. His rude, illiberal addreſs to an own parent might lead one to ſuſpect or foreſee the ſhameful uſes which he would put it to. His time, his ſubſtance, his morals, his underſtanding, were ſoon laid miſerably waſte in the worſt of company.

How is our *pity* for him drawn forth by each ſingle *circumſtance* recorded by the evangeliſt. *And when he had ſpent all there aroſe a mighty* FAMINE *in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went*

went and joined himſelf to a citizen of that country, and he ſent him into his fields to feed ſwine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the huſks that the ſwine did eat, and NO MAN GAVE UNTO *him.* How *pathetic* is that exclamation which his preſent diſtreſsful ſituation ſo forcibly drew from him! *How many hired ſervants of my father's have bread enough and to ſpare, and I periſh with hunger!* The bare recollection of what he had been while he lived in ſplendor at his father's houſe, only ſerved to heighten the miſery of what he was, a forlorn outcaſt and vagabond. Can we behold the firſt dawning of reformation in him, or hear him breaking forth, *I will ariſe, and go to my father, &c.* without feeling our hearts diſtend with joy? The reception which his father gave him upon his return, the diſcontent of his brother at ſuch a reception, the reply of

the father to ſuch his diſcontent, are all peculiarly intereſting to the reader, and raiſe in him the moſt melting paſſions of humanity and commiſeration.

No man, even at this diſtance of time, is able to read the *parable* of the *unmerciful ſervant* without feeling a juſt *indignation* and *reſentment* againſt him. The ſentence which his *Lord* paſſed upon him, is ſuch as cannot but be deemed the moſt juſt and equitable by every reader. Let reaſon alone, without any of her corrupt aſſeſſors, take the chair, and ſhe will directly ratify and applaud it. *O thou wicked ſervant, I forgave thee all that debt, becauſe thou deſiredſt it: ſhouldſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion on thy fellow-ſervant, even as I had pity on thee?* is a remonſtrance that carries with it no ſmall degree of poignancy and bitterneſs. How utterly odi-

ous

ous and inexcuſeable did it render him even in his own eyes, putting him to ſilence and confuſion. Upon many an occaſion indeed hath our bleſſed maſter powerfully enforced that ſpirit of humanity which is the peculiar characteriſtic of a good and great mind, as well as a leading part of his own character. Can any concluſion then be more plain and certain than this, that no ſoundneſs in the faith, no external obſervances, no tranſient flaſhes of devotion, can ever atone for the want of thoſe eſſential ingredients of the chriſtian life, juſtice, charity, temperance and humility? *

HIS DISCOURSE that begins with *Let not your heart be troubled*, is a maſter-

* It is the genius of enthuſiaſm to ſet moral virtues infinitely below the merit of faith; but if you would ſee in what reſpects morality hath the preeminence over faith, peruſe the *Spectator*, No. 459.

piece

piece in the conſolatory kind. It is full of all thoſe ſpecial motives and arguments which are wont to have the greateſt influence upon human nature. *I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myſelf, that where I am there ye may be alſo,* are words that might alone ſuffice to heal every painful reflection, and reconcile his diſciples to parting with him for a *ſeaſon*. The prayer to his father, which he cloſes ſo inimitable a diſcourſe with, deſerves to be written in letters of gold. * *John* xiv. 15, 16, 17.

St. PAUL is no leſs to be admired for raiſing the affections, than convincing

* Who that hath the heart and bowels of a man can read without a ſigh *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that, &c.* Matt. xxiii. 37. And again, *If thou hadſt known even, &c.* Luke xix. 42.

the reaſon of his hearers. The diſcourſe, in which he took his leave of the elders of the church at *Miletus*, is an admirable ſpecimen of the *pathetic*.

The exordium, in which he appeals to their own perſonal knowledge for his exemplary conduct, becoming an embaſſador of Jeſus Chriſt, is noble and affecting. *Ye know, from the firſt day that I came into Aſia, after what manner I have been with you, ſerving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many fears and temptations which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, teſtifying to the Jews and alſo to the Greeks repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Acts xx. 18, &c. Is it poſſible to liſten to the magnanimous reſolution of this chriſtian hero contained in the verſes that follow, without

without feeling the alternate emotions of *pity* and *admiration*? *And now behold I go bound in the ſpirit unto Jeruſalem, not knowing the things that ſhall befall me there, ſave that the Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every city, ſaying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I received of the Lord Jeſus.* ver. 22, 23, &c. What a natural and genuine eloquence goes along with the inward feelings of a good heart! How glorious and triumphant, how big with joy and conſolation is his ſolemn proteſtation and appeal to them, that himſelf is in no wiſe anſwerable for the loſs of a ſingle ſoul. *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not ſhunned to declare to you all the counſel of God,* ver. 26, 27. His

concern for them, leſt they ſhould after his departure be ſeduced by factious teachers, together with his recommendation of them to the divine care and protection, is exquiſitely paſſionate and tender: *Therefore watch, and remember that for the ſpace of three years I ceaſed not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are ſanctified.* ver. 31, 32. The peculiar qualities in ſentiment which occaſion the impreſſion of *pathos*, are no other than that ardent zeal for their eternal welfare, that pure and unfeigned love for the cauſe of his dear *Lord* and maſter, that thorough contempt for every ſpecies of danger and perſecution, that diſintereſted ſpirit which *coveted no man's ſilver and gold.*

Let

Let the preſent embaſſador of Chriſt learn from ſo finiſhed a model what he ought to be, or bluſh and be confounded for what he really is. If he would have his people ſo account of him as of the miniſter of Chriſt, let him act and talk and think as it becometh one inveſted with that auguſt and honourable character. A good life is the moſt compendious and the moſt powerful of all reformers. It is a ſort of argument that lies level to the apprehenſions, and will find its way into the hearts, of all men. Primitive lives and primitive labours can and will alone recover the reſpect paid to our function in primitive days. As long as the preacher of the Goſpel keeps his eye ſteadily fixed upon that great end which he hath laid himſelf under the moſt ſolemn vows never to loſe ſight of, I mean the ſalvation of thoſe committed to his charge, he may look upon himſelf, and ought to be

looked upon by others, as a *fellow-worker* with *God*. But as ſoon as he takes his eye off from, or pays little or no attention to ſuch end, he ought to conſider himſelf, and will be conſidered by others, as the moſt perfidious of all traitors, the moſt contemptible of all hypocrites.

His epiſtle to *Philemon*, written in the year *ſixty-two*, is a beautiful ſpecimen of the *tender* and *affecting*. Never was a ſuit or addreſs drawn up in more endearing and affectionate terms, never did it contain more preſſing and invincible motives or arguments. How ſkilfully does the apoſtle conciliate his favour, by making honourable mention of his ſteadineſs to the religion of Chriſt as well as of his charity to all its profeſſors, before he opens his addreſs in behalf of a *ſervant* that had *robbed* him. *Paul, a priſoner*

ſoner of Jeſus Chriſt, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved and fellow-labourer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-ſoldier, and to the church in thy houſe: Grace to you, and peace from God our father and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, hearing of thy love and faith which thou haſt towards the Lord Jeſus, and toward all ſaints; that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Chriſt Jeſus. For we have great joy and conſolation in thy love, becauſe the bowels of the ſaints are refreſhed by thee, BROTHER. The endearing appellation of *brother*, which he cloſes with, carries with it methinks no ordinary *pathos*, and could not but diſpoſe him to lend a willing ear to the requeſt that he was about to make. *Wherefore,*

though I might be much bold in Chriſt, to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's ſake I rather beſeech thee, being ſuch a one as PAUL THE AGED, AND NOW ALSO A PRISONER OF JESUS CHRIST. How handſomely does he aſſume, though a priſoner, how humbly condeſcend, though an apoſtle! Liſten now to his addreſs of reconciliation itſelf, compoſed of the moſt ſoft and melting words that language can poſſibly afford. *I beſeech thee for* MY SON *Oneſimus, whom I have* BEGOTTEN IN MY BONDS: *Who in time paſt was to thee unprofitable* (or rather *injurious* according to the original word) *but now profitable to thee and to me: Whom I have ſent again: thou therefore receive him* THAT IS MINE OWN BOWELS: *Whom I would have retained with me, that in* THY STEAD *he might have miniſtred unto me in the* BONDS *of the* GOSPEL. *But without thy mind would I not do any*

thing, that thy benefit ſhould not be as it were of neceſſity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a ſeaſon that thou ſhouldeſt receive him for ever; not now as a ſervant, but ABOVE A SERVANT, A BROTHER BELOVED, SPECIALLY TO ME, *but* HOW MUCH MORE UNTO THEE, *both in the fleſh and in the Lord.* Was there ever ſuch a ſpirit of generous humanity and compaſſion, ſuch an unfeigned love and regard *towards* a reformed ſinner? What an additional weight and *emphaſis* muſt *this* ſuit in his behalf receive from what he adds in the verſes that follow: *If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myſelf. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.* Was it poſſible that all which the apoſtle had hitherto urged could fail of ſoftening *Philemon*'s diſpleaſure againſt his ſervant,

he could not ſurely reſiſt the force of, ALLBEIT I DO NOT SAY TO THEE HOW THOU OWEST UNTO ME EVEN THINE OWN SELF BESIDES, than which a finer inſtance of that figure called a *prolepſis*, or omiſſion, is not to be met with in any Greek or Roman writer. *Yea*, BROTHER, *let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refreſh my bowels in the Lord*, is much too touching to be withſtood by the moſt obdurate breaſt that ever entered into the compoſition of a man. That entire confidence which St. *Paul* placed in him for the ſucceſs of his petition, was, to an ingenuous mind, a new and forcible reaſon for an immediate compliance with it. *Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote to thee, knowing that thou wilt alſo do more than I ſay.* Strange! that ſuch a maſter-piece in the epiſtolary kind, hath been deemed by ſome unworthy of a place among the writings of a *Paul*.

The

The plain and ſimple narrative of thoſe unparalleled diſtreſſes which the great apoſtle endured, nay took a pleaſure in enduring, for the ſake of Chriſt and his truth, is truly affecting. *Are they* (ſays he, ſpeaking of certain falſe teachers who ſtiffly oppoſed him and his doctrine) *miniſters of Chriſt? (I ſpeak as a fool) I am more: in labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I ſtoned, thrice I ſuffered ſhipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderneſs, in perils in the ſea, in perils among falſe brethren; in wearineſs and painfulneſs, in watchings often, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings*

faſtings often, in cold and nakedneſs. Beſides thoſe things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 2 Cor. xi. 23, 24, &c. There is ſomething in that compaſſion which ariſes from the bare peruſal of it, that caſts an agreeable melancholy upon the mind. It was the glorious object of his ambition to *win ſouls unto Chriſt*, from the day of his converſion to the laſt moment of his life, and he undauntedly purſued it through all the variety of inſults and perſecution which his ſecret and profeſſed enemies could think of to traverſe and perplex his way. How long did he perſevere in the cauſe of his dear maſter, triumphing over all the confederacies of earth and hell, that were with one *heart* and with one *ſoul* bent upon his deſtruction! Let me juſt remark, that if you inſerted the *copulatives* in this animated and circumſtantial relation

of

of his diſtreſſes, you would inſtantly diveſt it of all its life, energy, and ſpirit. *

Many a beautiful example of that *figure* in rhetorick, which is peculiarly adapted to move the paſſions, I mean an *apoſtrophe*, occurs in his admirable epiſtles. To quote only a ſingle one from his ſecond epiſtle to the Corinthians, a conſiderable part of which refers to the ſucceſs that his firſt had in the *Corinthian church*, which appears to be different according to the tempers of the perſons concerned in it. Breaking off from the

* To bind the limbs of racers is to deprive them of active motion and the power of ſtretching. In like manner the pathetic, when embarraſſed and entangled in the bonds of copulatives, cannot ſubſiſt without difficulty. It is quite deprived of liberty in its race, and diveſted of that impetuoſity by which it ſtrikes the very inſtant it is diſcharged.

LONGINUS, S. 21.

moſt

moſt amiable account of what he *was*, and *did* for their ſake and the Goſpel, the apoſtle exclaims as it were in an extaſy, *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not ſtraitned in us, but ye are ſtraitned in your own bowels.* 2 Cor. vi. 11, 12. This is no other than the genuine language of a man whoſe heart was as richly furniſhed as his head, of a man who loved his brethren as he did his own ſoul, of a man who had no other view in writing to them but to ſtamp thoſe chriſtian impreſſions upon their minds which he felt in his own.

The oppoſition, or *antitheſis*, which precedes it, hath nothing to be compared with it in any of the moſt celebrated heathen writers. *As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chaſtened, and not killed; as ſorrowful,*

yet

yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things. ver. 9, 10. Of the like ſort is another inſtance of the ſame *figure*, which occurs in the ſeventh chapter of his former epiſtle. *Brethren, the time is ſhort. It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this world, as not abuſing it: for the faſhion of this world paſſeth away.* 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

Neither the Grecian or Roman orator can furniſh us with more beautiful examples of *amplification* than theſe that follow. Do not our raptured breaſts glow with all the fervor and ſpirit of the great apoſtle himſelf, when he breaks

forth, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? (As it is written, For thy ſake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as ſheep for the ſlaughter.) Nay in all theſe things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am perſuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Rom. viii. 35, &c. And again, where he is ſhewing the folly of giving the preference to certain teachers for their mere human accompliſhments, and begs of them not to divide any longer under different ſects and parties, as being members of the *church of Chriſt*, the common author of all our bleſſings, he pathetically

ſays,

ſays, *Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world* (the Jews imagining vainly that the *world* was created for the ſeed and poſterity of Abraham only) *or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Chriſt's; and Chriſt is God's.* 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c. Of how different a ſtamp are thoſe vicious *amplifications* which abound in certain writers who are ſo wonderfully fond of *fine* and *glaring* thoughts.

No writer beſide is more full of vigorous and lively *interrogations* than St. Paul. The heads of a *faction* maliciouſly inſinuating that his very refuſal of a maintenance from the Corinthian chriſtians was a kind of tacit confeſſion that he was not indeed a true apoſtle, he turns upon them with no ordinary force

and

and ſpirit in his epiſtle to that church. *Am I not an apoſtle? am I not free? have I not ſeen Jeſus Chriſt our Lord? are not you my work in the Lord? If I be not an apoſtle unto others, yet doubtleſs I am to you: for the ſeal of mine apoſtleſhip are ye in the Lord.* To content the Gentile chriſtians, who took it ill that he did not receive a maintenance, he ſtill claims it as his due, ſaying, *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? If we have ſown unto you ſpiritual things, is it a great thing if we ſhall reap your carnal things?* 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2, &c. And in the ſixth chapter, where the apoſtle warns them eſpecially againſt the ſin of uncleanneſs, he forcibly interrogates them with, *Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Chriſt? Shall I then* (by a beautiful change

change of perſon, transferring the odium of ſuch a heinous charge upon himſelf) *take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.* 1 Cor. vi. 15. In what other writer, ſacred or profane, do we meet with ſuch emphatical and *pathetic Exclamations?* Having proved that the Moſaical law was altogether inſufficient either to cure the habits or atone for the guilt of ſin, he feelingly breaks forth, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death! I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Rom. vii. 24. And again, where he demonſtrates how God hath offered both to Jews and Gentiles in their turn the means of pardon and redemption, making them as it were inſtrumental to the converſion of each other, he exclaims with rapture and aſtoniſhment, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God!*

how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out! Rom. xi. 33. Of how different a kind are certain cold and inſipid exclamations which your orator of an enthuſiaſtic caſt ſhall pour forth with ſuch wild profuſion on all occaſions.

For meaning, ſigns and motions he affords,
And interjections for the want of words.

St. *Paul*'s ſketch of the laſt day is compoſed of ſuch images of greatneſs and terror as can hardly fail to leave ſuitable impreſſions behind them on the minds of every true believer. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* 2 Theſ. i. 7, 8, 9. Of the like awful

ſtamp

ſtamp is that more circumſtantial relation of Chriſt's coming to judge both the quick and the dead towards the concluſion of his former epiſtle to the Theſſalonians. *The Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt: Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.——Yourſelves know perfectly* (making uſe of the preſent tenſe to make the deſcription ſtill more affecting) *that the day of the Lord ſo cometh as a thief in the night. For when they ſhall ſay, Peace and ſafety; then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they ſhall not eſcape.* 1 Theſ. iv. 16, 17. v. 2, 3. Is it poſſible for the moſt careleſs ſinner to liſten to what the apoſtle ſays upon this great article of

a judgment to come without a ſudden *panic* or *tremor*? Could two more appoſite *compariſons* be found out to repreſent the ſuddenneſs of *Chriſt*'s coming? Shall the *Chriſtian Orator* of to-day, treating upon this ſubject, really paſs over in ſilence the ſame *images* and colours, or go about to repreſent this fundamental truth under others which he ſimply enough takes to be better?

What oppoſite impreſſions of love, tenderneſs, and ſympathy, does the apoſtle excite in our breaſts, when his ſoul thus addreſſes itſelf to his converts at Corinth: *What is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myſelf was not burdenſome to you? forgive me this wrong. Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdenſome to you; for I ſeek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents,*

but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly ſpend and be ſpent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the leſs I be loved. 2 Cor. xii. 13, 14, 15. And again, in his epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, whom he had for a ſeaſon abſented himſelf from through unavoidable neceſſity, liſten to the moſt endearing language that ever dropped from the pen of man. *We were gentle among you, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her children: So, being affectionately deſirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the goſpel of God only, but alſo our own ſouls, becauſe ye were dear unto us.—As ye know, how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you (as a father doth his children) that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.—But we, brethren, being taken from you for a ſhort time, in preſence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly*

to ſee your face with great deſire. Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; but Satan hindred us. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. 1 Theſ. ii. 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20. The perſon who is not touched with theſe words of affection itſelf, does not deſerve the name of a man. A hundred paſſages of a like ſort occur in his inimitable epiſtles, which are no other than the genuine effuſions of the heart. See *Philip.* ii. 17, 18. *Coloſ.* ii. 1, 2. *Eph.* iii. 13, 14, &c. 1 *Theſ.* iii. 8. *

Let

* If you would ſee the paſſions delineated in the moſt ſkilful and maſterly manner, if you would behold the moſt perfect imitations of joy, ſorrow, fear, indignation, and the like, peruſe the ſacred *Poetry* of the *Hebrews*. A juſtly admired critic, who poſ-

ſeſſed

Let me juſt add, that this great maſter of chriſtian eloquence did not confide in the powers of his oratory alone for ſubduing the hearts of men to the acknowledgment of the truth. There was

ſeſſed that accuracy of diſcernment which enabled him to reflect upon his own *feelings* with diſtinctneſs, as well as to explain them with the utmoſt preciſion to others, hath ſelected the moſt ſtriking examples of this kind in his ineſtimable *lectures* upon that ſubject. Nihil poteſt eſſe magnificentius & grandius quam Iracundiæ & Indignationis præſertim divinæ repreſentatio, cujus rei inſigne exemplum præbet tota *Moſis Ode Prophetica*, *Deut.* xxxii.—Apud *Jobum* quâ magnificentiâ & ſublimitate exprimitur Mœror & deſperatio. c. vi. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9. Nec minus in *Terrore* vel incutiendo vel exprimendo totum poema excellit.—Totus fere eſt ineo λαδεῖ *Ezekiel*: excellit etiam *Iſaias*, quanquam lætarum rerum & ſalutis plerumque nuncius. c. xiii. 1—13. Nec hoc minus eminet *Jeremias*, etſi lenioribus affectibus magis fortaſſe idoneus. Exemplo ſit Viſio imminantem Judeæ cladem cum mirâ evidentiâ extribens.

PRÆL. xvii. vide PRÆL. ix.

another weapon, by virtue of which he was enabled to ride triumphant over all the oppoſition, all the malice, of as many as took counſel together againſt him, I mean Prayer. Liſten to the opening of his admirable letter to the *Coloſians*, whom he had never ſeen, but would fain guard againſt the *Jewiſh zealots*, that went about to perſuade them to a neceſſity of obſerving the ceremonial law, as well as againſt the mixture of *Gentile philoſophy*, with their *Chriſtian principle*. *We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, praying always for you: ſince we heard of your faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and of the love which ye have to all the ſaints; for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the goſpel: Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth alſo in you, ſince the day ye heard*

of

of it, and knew the grace of God in truth. As ye alſo learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-ſervant, who is for you a faithful miniſter of Chriſt; who alſo declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cauſe we alſo, ſince the day we heard it, do not ceaſe to pray for you, and to deſire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding: that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work, and increaſing in the knowledge of God. Coloſ. i. 3, 4, &c. And again, in his epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, that was written from *Corinth* upon the ſame argument and occaſion, he breaks forth in the beginning of it, *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembring without ceaſing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the ſight of*

of God, and our Father: knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 1 Theſ. i. 2, 3, 4. That affectionate vow which it is cloſed with, could only be dictated by a heart that was enflamed with the moſt ardent love for their true, their everlaſting intereſt and welfare. *And the very God of peace ſanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole ſpirit and ſoul and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* 1 Theſ. v. 23.

Of how different a ſtamp is that falſe *pathos* which certain ſpiritual *Quixots* are ſo apt to deal in! They really ſeem to imagine that they have little or nothing to do but to bawl, uſe apiſh and violent geſtures, and ſpeak often of *hell* and the *devil* with due emphaſis. A preacher of this claſs rouzing his indignation, and hardening his forehead with many

Avaunt

Avaunt Satans, might addreſs his crowds in the following language of Lord SHAFTESBURY. "As for you vulgar "ſouls, mere naturals, who know no "art, were never admitted into the "temple of wiſdom, nor ever viſited "the ſanctuaries of wit or learning, "gather yourſelves together from all "parts, and hearken to the tale I am "about to utter. But for you, men of "ſcience and underſtanding, who have "ears and judgment, and can weigh "ſenſe and meaſure ſounds; you, who, "by a certain art, diſtinguiſh falſe "thoughts from true, correctneſs from "rudeneſs, bombaſt and chaos from "order and the ſublime: Away, hence! "or ſtand aloof, whilſt I practiſe upon "the eaſineſs of thoſe mean capacities "and apprehenſions, who make the "moſt numerous audience, and are the "only competent judges of my la-

"bours."

" bours." Crude abortive thoughts, low and ſilly affectations, tranſports of imagination out of the ſphere of common ſenſe, a figurative application of the moſt luſcious expreſſions and ſenſible ideas to religious ſubjects, make up the ſum total of his labours or applauded oratory.

The talent of moving the paſſions does not belong to above one in a thouſand of thoſe who are ſo ſilly or ſo unfortunate as to think themſelves really poſſeſſed of it. A writer of this ſpecies, who ſeemed altogether bent upon *wetting* the *handkerchiefs* of a whole congregation, choſe for that purpoſe to treat upon the *ſacrifice* of *Iſaac*. Liſten to his remarks or enlargements upon the few *ſimple* words which God ſpoke to *Abraham* upon that article. " That form " of words, ſays the preacher, which " God uſeth to his patriarch, is to his

" *head*

" *head* a mawl, in his *ſide* arrows, and " in his *heart* a ſword. *Take now*—no " leiſure to deliberate, no time to pre- " pare.——*Take now thy ſon*—even the " nearer relation the more cutting the " ſeverity——*thine only ſon*—Oh ſtab- " bing, for pure pity that word *only* " ſhould have been omitted——*thine* " *only ſon Iſaac*—what by name too—— " *thine only Iſaac, whom thou loveſt*—— " No more, except ye would break " *Abraham*'s heart, no more. Do not " firſt draw out the bowels of his af- " fections into a full length, and after- " wards twiſt and torture them. The " father's memory is freſh enough of " itſelf, do not vex it as a thing that is " raw." One of the moſt touching narratives throughout the Bible is in a manner changed into downright burleſque by his puerile and inſipid comments. The truth is, flat and lifeleſs exaggerations,

aggerations, a ſeries of minute and trivial circumſtances, a want of ſimplicity in the ſentiment or expreſſion, are, in a peculiar manner, deſtructive of the true *pathos*.

Many a beautiful inſtance of *high and low nonſenſe* might be drawn out of this claſs of writers, according to the happy *

* Low *nonſenſe* is the talent of a *cold* phlegmatic temper, that in a poor diſpirited ſtile creeps along ſervilely through darkneſs and confuſion. A writer of this complexion gropes his way ſoftly among ſelf-contradictions, and grovels in abſurdities. On the contrary, your high nonſenſe bluſters and makes a noiſe: it ſtalks upon hard words, and rattles through polyſyllables. It is loud and ſonorous, ſmooth and periodical. That which gives nonſenſe the laſt finiſhing ſtroke and perfection is, when an author without any meaning ſeems to have it, and ſo impoſes upon us by the ſound and ranging of his words, that one is apt to fancy they ſignify ſomething.

diviſion

diviſion of Mr. ADDISON, who infinitely better deſerves the *ſirname* of the *Engliſh* tongue, than *Herodes* did that of the *Greek*. A promiſing diſcourſe that opened with ſome degree of temper and good ſenſe, ſhall, on a ſudden, expatiate for whole pages into idle *ramblings*, and at length go off in unintelligible *jargon*, which borders (and ſometimes more than borders) upon downright *frenzy*.

Much *vain* and *profane babling* hath aroſe out of an intemperate curioſity of prying into *the hidden things of God*, and a future ſtate. One man, in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, ſhall *babble* for half an hour together concerning the real nature of God, his powers and faculties, and the methods in which he exerciſes them. When he is told that *God* is a *ſpirit*, his preſumption ſhall lead him to enquire and determine wherein his *ſpi-*

rituality conſiſts, and in what preciſe reſpects he is ſuperior to all other Beings of a ſpiritual nature. Many kinds of ſpiritual perfection may belong to the divine nature, beſides thoſe which are lodged in an human ſoul; but it is impoſſible that he ſhould have ideas of any kinds of perfection, except thoſe of which he has ſome ſmall rays in himſelf. Again, when the *word of truth* reveals to him that there is both an *union* and *diſtinction* in the divine nature, the ſame principle ſhall put him upon making a ſlight effort at leaſt towards ſolving the manner of this union and diſtinction. Such a profeſſor of wiſdom is really fooliſh enough to believe it poſſible for a *finite* Being to comprehend an *infinite* one. For want of looking upon an article in the light of a myſtery, and conſequently incomprehenſible by him, or of diſtinguiſhing how it may be clearly revealed

revealed as to its exiſtence or the relation it hath to himſelf, and yet remain wholly obſcured as to its eſſence and properties, he is betrayed into an inextricable maze or labyrinth of diſpute and error. Each inquirer of this ſort ever did and muſt loſe himſelf in the thought or enquiry, inſtead of finding an end of it.

Another ſuch *profeſſor* of *wiſdom* ſhall be rather ambitious of knowing a little more of the *mind* and *counſels* of God, than hath been already revealed to him in holy writ. His undiſciplined imagination is full apt to rove upon certain *fooliſh and unlearned queſtions*, which are not quite ſo accurately diſcuſſed there as he could wiſh or deſire. Such a one wants to be told that *ſecret things belong unto God*, and to him alone; that if in the midſt of his fancied wiſdom he was

not in reality a *fool*, he would take it for granted that they are kept *ſecret* from him, either becauſe he is not able to know them, or becauſe it is not proper that he ſhould *know* them.

Know thy own point; this kind, this due degree
Of blindneſs, weakneſs, heav'n beſtows on thee.
Eſſay on Man.

A third man, not knowing how to reſt contented with what is written or dictated by the Spirit of God upon this article, ſhall be for puſhing his reſearches as far as poſſible into the regions of futurity. And here an unbounded field lies open to the excurſions of an ardent imagination, in which endleſs conjectures can alone ſupply the defect of that knowledge which is abſolutely unattainable. If he is told that this *corruption ſhall put on incorruption*, he will ſtill be enquiring,

quiring, and ſimply go about to aſcertain what that immutable ſtate of perfection is which is here repreſented under the notion of *incorruption*. Or when it is revealed that the *ſaints ſhall reign for ever*, he would fain have an adequate conception of thoſe particulars which make up the happy and glorious *ſtate* of the *ſaints above*. Such a profeſſor of wiſdom is ſtill to learn that we can have no proper or immediate idea from *ſenſe* or *reaſon* of the real nature of any thing relating to another life as it is in itſelf. If indeed the powers of knowledge that man is already endued with, were perfectly adapted to the objects of a world to come, there would be no occaſion for a change at the laſt day. St. *Paul*, who was caught up into *Paradiſe*, can only tell us, that what he heard was ſo infinitely different from any thing which he had heard in this world, that it was impoſſible

for him to expreſs it in ſuch words as might convey an idea of it to his hearers. *I knew* (ſays he, modeſtly ſpeaking of himſelf in a third perſon) *a man in Chriſt above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth) ſuch an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew ſuch a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth) how that he was caught up into paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4.

The prophet *Eſdras* hath, with great ſtrength of ridicule, expoſed the folly of a man who indulges a blind giddy inclination of prying into the ſecrets of futurity, or intruding into the counſels of the Moſt High, by introducing an angel that holds the following conference

ference with him: *The angel ſaid to me, Go thy way, weigh me the weight of the fire, or meaſure me the blaſt of the wind, or call me again the day that is paſt. Then anſwered I and ſaid, What man is able to do that, that thou ſhouldſt aſk ſuch things of me? And he ſaid unto me, If I ſhould aſk thee how great dwellings are in the midſt of the ſea, or how many ſprings are in the beginning of the deep, or how many ſprings are above the firmament, or which are the outgoings of paradiſe: peradventure thou wouldſt ſay unto me, I never went down into the deep, nor as yet into hell, neither did I ever climb up into heaven. Nevertheleſs, now have I aſked thee but only of the fire and wind, and of the day where through thou haſt paſſed, and of things from which thou canſt not be ſeparated, and yet canſt thou give me no anſwer of them. He ſaid moreover unto me, Thine own things,*

and ſuch as are grown up with thee, canſt thou not know; How ſhould thy veſſel then be able to comprehend the way of the Higheſt. 2 Eſdras iv. 5, 6, &c. And again the diſcourſe is thus renewed in the fifth chapter: *The angel ſaid to me, Thou art ſore troubled in mind for Iſrael's ſake: loveſt thou that people better than he that made them? And I ſaid, No Lord, but of very grief have I ſpoken: for my reins pain me every hour, while I labour to comprehend the way of the Moſt High, and to ſeek out part of his judgment. And he ſaid unto me, Thou canſt not: And I ſaid, Wherefore Lord? whereunto was I born then? or why was not my mother's womb then my grave, that I might not have ſeen the travel of Jacob, and the weariſome toil of the ſtock of Iſrael? And he ſaid unto me, Number me the things that are not yet come, gather me together the drops that are ſcattered abroad, make*

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me the flowers green again that are withered, open me the places that are closed, and bring me forth the winds that in them are shut up, shew me the image of a voice; and then I will declare to thee the thing that thou labourest to know. And I said, O Lord that bearest rule, who may know these things, but he that hath not his dwelling with men? As for me, I am unwise: how may I then speak of these things whereof thou askest me? Then said he unto me, Like as thou canst do none of these things that I have spoken of, even so canst thou not find out my judgment, or in the end the love that I have promised unto my people. 2 Esdras v. 33, 34, &c.

Difficult enough it may be to ascertain how far the boasted faculty of *reason*, improved to the utmost degree of perfection, might possibly carry an enquirer after truth, because no man living hath

perhaps yet ever made the experiment. Whatever its limits may be beyond which it was originally declared by its great Author, *hitherto ſhall thou go, and no farther*, this at leaſt is certain, that it is of a finite and limited nature. We find, by hourly experience, that we are preſently arrived at the end of our line, which is in no wiſe able to fathom the moſt ordinary and familiar things in nature. How altogether abſurd and miſtaken creatures then are thoſe who ſhall not ſcruple to maintain that mere unaſſiſted reaſon is of itſelf ſufficient to lead us into all needful truth, nay directly conclude certain articles of faith to be contrary to *reaſon*, only becauſe they happen to be above it.

The bliſs of man (could pride that bleſſing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;

No

No powers of body or of ſoul to ſhare,
But what his nature and his ſtate can bear.

Eſſay on Man.

SOLOMON, in his excellent treatiſe called the *Book* of *Wiſdom*, hath given to that word which came down from heaven, the epithet of *Almighty*. The religion of Chriſt was the great inſtrument ordained by God before all ages to enlighten, to ſanctify, to preſerve a loſt world. Nor can the powerful efficacy of its doctrines in turning thouſands and ten thouſands from the *power* of *Satan* to the *ſervice* of the *living God*, be at any rate diſproved or called in queſtion. And is not that *Goſpel* which was the *wiſdom* and *power* of God in bringing about ſuch wonderful converſions ſo many hundred years ſince, the ſame wiſdom and the ſame power to this day? Is not the word of God ſtill in itſelf

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quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit? Is its real native excellence at all leſs beautiful and ſtriking, are the proſpects which it opens to our view at all leſs wonderful and alluring, or is the evidence upon which it reſts a jot leſs ſtrong, leſs adapted to make impreſſion upon every fair and unprejudiced mind? *If theſe things are ſo,* how are we to account for the lamentable and much complained of barrenneſs of the word of God in our own age? Can the weight it has loſt be poſſibly imputed to any other than theſe two reaſons? Either the preacher does not know how to handle the word as it ought to be handled, or the people do not know how to hear it as it ought to be heard. The principal defects on the part of the former have been imperfectly pointed out in the courſe of theſe ſheets,

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and thoſe on the ſide of the latter may be ſummed up in a very few words. I need only make mention of a couple, either of which will abundantly ſuffice to render the beſt ſermon imaginable utterly vain and fruitleſs. The firſt is, when the people liſten to it not as the word of God but as the word of man; and the ſecond, when liſtening to it as the *word of God*, they ſtill forget to make a due application of it to themſelves. Mark the effects of a diſcourſe which St. *Paul* delivered to the people at *Lyſtra*, who looked upon it merely as the word of man. Inſtead of renouncing their idolatry and embracing the chriſtian faith, they contented themſelves with beſtowing a little incenſe upon the *preacher*, calling him *Mercurius*, i. e. *Jupiter*'s attendant, and interpreter of his will, *Acts* xiv. 12. And is this order of hearers altogether extinct at preſent? May we not

not apply the words of the prophet to full many an orator whom the people are ſo laviſh in the praiſes of, ſo loud in extolling even to the *echo*. *Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.* Ezekiel xxxiii. 32.

The great apoſtle declares himſelf thoroughly diſguſted with thoſe who ſlighted or withdrew themſelves from other orthodox teachers through a peculiar attachment or liking to himſelf. Amiably forgetful of his own ſuperior merit or talents, he breaks forth, *Is Chriſt divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increaſe.* The goodneſs of the *ſoil* upon

which the *ſeed* is *ſown*, accompanied with the divine *grace* or bleſſing, are the great articles from which a fruitful crop or *increaſe* may reaſonably be expected. Let the *ſeed* itſelf be ever ſo good, or the *ſower* himſelf ever ſo ſkilful, ſtill if it falls upon *ſtony ground* or among *thorns*, it will become *unfruitful*, and might far better not have been *ſown* at all. The truth is, when God ſpeaks by the mouth of his *embaſſador* upon earth, he looks that the ſame attention and regard ſhould be paid to him, as if he was himſelf ſpeaking in perſon. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me.* Luke x. 16. And as many as are indifferent about, or averſe to, hearing the word, unleſs it proceeds from the lips of this or that ſpecial embaſſador, may be numbered among ſuch as receive it not as the *word of God*, but as the *word of man*. St. *Paul*, in his

firſt

firſt epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, bears this honourable teſtimony to them, at the ſame time that he thanks God for having it in his power to do ſo. *For this cauſe alſo thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.* 1 Theſ. ii. 13.

But admitting the people who ſit under us to receive it aright, or *as it is in truth the word of God*, how can they expect to be at all the better for what they thus receive, unleſs they make a particular application of that *word* to their own boſoms. Thoſe eternal truths of which it is compoſed, are only able to touch, perſuade, or convert as many as can find leiſure and inclination to medi-

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tate upon, or lay them ſeriouſly to heart. Let the preacher dwell as *pathetically* as poſſible upon the great articles of a *heaven*, a *hell*, or a *judgment* to come, he and his words ſhall be no more regarded by certain hearers than as *ſounding braſs*, or a *tinkling cymbal*. And if a few others of a more ſerious turn cannot but feel the weight and importance of what he hath delivered, they think that they have ſufficiently done *their part* in granting that they have thus *felt* it. *

* A ſet of hearers common in his days, is thus pleaſantly pictured by BRUYERE. "What a ju-
"dicious and admirable diſcourſe is this, cry all
"that hear it, and 'tis true, for the moſt eſſential
"points of religion, as well as the ſtrongeſt motives
"to converſion, were copiouſly handled in it. What
"effect does it produce in the minds and ſpirits of
"the audience? They are convinced, they are
"moved and touched to that degree, that they con-
"feſs from their ſouls—What? That this ſermon
"of *Theodorus* excels even his laſt."

The

The ſermons of a *Peter* or *Paul*, which were ſaid to gain over their thouſands, were followed by ſomething better than an empty *elogium* upon the apoſtles themſelves, for the hearers went away, ſaying, *What muſt we do to be ſaved?*

They were not ſo wholly taken up with dwelling upon the juſtneſs of their deſign, the beauty of their remarks, the force of their expreſſions, the happy arrangement of their proofs, as quite to forget or loſe ſight of one little circumſtance, I mean their own reformation. Penetrated with a far different ſpirit from that of curioſity in examining, or malignity in cenſuring what they had heard, they go their way with a fixed reſolution of applying it to the great purpoſe of ſaving their ſouls alive. All their thoughts, all their deſires, all their ambition, center in this ſingle article,

how

how they ſhall themſelves *preſs towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* Having nothing leſs than heaven in view, they are aſpiring with all their might to that perfection of holineſs which might give them a right to the moſt diſtinguiſhed places in it.

And the man who can preach an audience into ſuch a god-like frame of mind, who is ſkilful enough to diſpenſe the *word* of *truth* in ſuch a manner as to *open their eyes, and turn them from darkneſs to light*, who knows how to poſſeſs greatneſs of ſoul without pride, fervour of ſpirit without indiſcretion, an humble diſpoſition without meanneſs, contempt of the world without arrogance, ſuch a one may ſtill glad all heaven with millions of his

own saving, and put in his justest cla
to that august and honourable title
the CHRISTIAN ORATOR.

F I N I S.



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